The Role of Input-based and Output-based Language Teaching in Learning English Phrasal Verbs by Upper-intermediate Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract

The present study attempts to explore the impact of input-based and output-based pedagogical approaches on learning English phrasal verbs by upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners. It also investigates whether there is any significant difference between Iranian male and female EFL learners regarding input-based and output-based language teaching.73 upper-intermediate English learners participated in the study, 34 of whom were males and 39 of whom were females with an age range of 17 to 28 years old. They were divided into two intact homogeneous groups, one of which received input-based approach for teaching English phrasal verbs and the other one took advantage of output-based language teaching for the same phrasal verbs. A Test of Phrasal Verbs which is made by the researcher was used for both the pre- and post-test. Three descriptive analysis and independent-samples t-tests were used to analyse the data. Regarding the first research question, an independent-samples t-test analysis indicated that there was a significant difference between input-based and output-based instruction in teaching phrasal verbs. That is, output-based language teaching outperformed input-based language teaching and leads to better learning of the English phrasal verbs. The results of the second independent-samples t-test suggested that there was no significant difference between male and female Iranian EFL learners in output-based teaching of English phrasal verbs. The study also showed no significant difference between both genders in input-based teaching of English phrasal verbs. That is, input- and output-based instructions had no effect on genders in learning phrasal verbs.

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Introduction

During the past decades input has become even more important in the work of researchers using cognitive models to second/foreign language learning (Ellis, 1999). Input-based proponents believe that learning is basically achieved by exposure to language input in the form of written or spoken texts and language descriptions (Basturkmen, 2006). From a cognitive perspective, language development is greatly required to be exposed to input to occur. It has been demonstrated that through input acquisition will be achieved more easily (Gass, 1997). Output-based instruction, on the other hand, tries to make students communicate. In this kind of instruction, a situation will be provided in which students are required to make production tasks at the beginning of the lesson or activity. The reason is that when students are involved in language production, they can identify where their inter language is sufficient for the performance and where it is not (Basturkmen, 2006). There are studies that propose that the role of input is more important than the role of output which merely makes access to a formerly developed second language (L2) system easy (Vanpatten & Wong, 2004). However, some other studies (e.g., Harley & Swain, 1984; Swain, 1995) have indicated that exposure to input is not enough for developing native like accuracy. The argument over the primary role of input and output in L2 development led researchers to compare the effects of different types of input-based and output-based instruction on L2 development (Rassaei, 2012). Phrasal verbs create special problems for students, partly because there are so many of them, and also because the combination of verb and particle often seems completely random. These difficulties are sometimes increased by the way in which phrasal verbs are presented in course books or by teachers telling students that they will just have to learn them by heart, thereby implying that there is no system. However, if one looks closely at the particle, patterns start to emerge which suggest that the combinations are not so random after all (Side, 1990).

The Role of Input-based Strategy in Language Learning

Research is continuing to find out what aspects of second language acquisition (SLA) have the biggest impacts on learners. There is a consensus of opinion among researchers that input is essential for language acquisition to take place but they may not have similar ideas about the way it is used by learners (Gass & Selinker, 2008). Input may be operationally defined as "oral and/or written corpus of target language to which L2 learners are exposed through various sources, and is recognized by them as language input" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 26). Ellis (2012) defines input-based instruction as an instruction that "involves the manipulation of the input that learners are exposed to or are required to process" (p. 285). In this strategy, through exposure to language input, if students find the way language works or the way language is practiced in workplace, or professional target environment, learning will be achieved (Basturkmen, 2006). Van Patten and Cadierno (1993) emphasized that instructing learners to perceive and process input appropriately is more important than teaching them to produce language output. In other words, instruction which improves the way input is perceived and processed by learners is more likely to become intake. Ellis (1997) also states that the integration of intake into learners' implicit/declarative knowledge is the result of the application of input not output. In fact, input strategy can be referred to theories of language learning proposed by Krashen (1982), who maintained that learners acquire language when they understand what they hear and what they read (Basturkmen, 2006). Linguists such as Krashen (1994) and Long (1996) claimed that meaningful input is one of the most important factors in language development in general and in L2 development in particular. Without comprehending input, there is no acquisition and finally no retention of the skills in the L2 (Krashen, 1985). A main question in the field of SLA is to what extent and in what ways learners' attention should be attracted to certain forms. One of the methods of formal instruction in which the concepts of noticing and consciousness-raising is highlighted is the focus-on-form (FonF) approach, a kind of instruction that clearly draws students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise implicitly in lessons whose center of attention is on meaning or communication (Long, 1991). As a type of FonF instruction, textual enhancement usually determined by underlying, **boldfacing**, *italicizing*, or CAPITALIZING, is believed to draw learners' attention and as a result they will acquire those aspects of input that are more noticeable and salient (Trahy, 1996; cited in Rassaei, 2012).
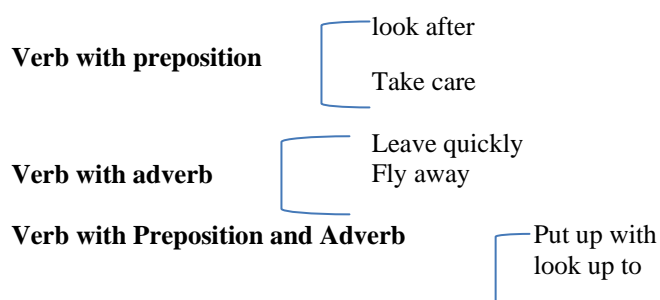
The Role of Output-based Strategy in Language Learning

For the first time, Swain (1985) argued that input alone is not sufficient for language learning and emphasized the role of output in L2 development. She recommended that language production, under certain circumstances, facilitates the process of L2 learning. She defined output as linguistic production, either oral or written, and the purpose of which is communication. That is, learners learn the

language by producing linguistic elements communicatively. She argued that "comprehensible output is the output that extends the linguistic repertoire of the learner as he or she attempts to create precisely and appropriately the meaning desired" (p. 252). She developed the Output Hypothesis as a complement to Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis. In addition, she considered the role of learner production of comprehensible output independent of the role of comprehensible input, and maintained that comprehensible output is also a necessary instrument in SLA. In other words, its roles can provide opportunities for contextualized, meaningful use, and move the learner from a merely semantic analysis of the language to a syntactic analysis of it (Swain, 1985). Output consists of retrieving language data from the system, while input itself is potential data for intake into the system. In other words, via input acquisition takes place, whereas through output acquisition processes are stimulated (Swain, 1998).

Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs are considered as very important components in English language, and their integrity appears in their various situations and contexts. Since the number of these kinds of verbs is abundant in English, students may find it difficult to learn and manipulate them. Bourton (1984) defines phrasal verb as "a type of English verb that operates more like a phrase than as a word. In other words, it functions as one single entity" (p.136). Bolinger (1971) points out that phrasal verbs are considered as neglected zones. Some consider them as collocations, for example, Lipka (1972) states that phrasal verbs are simple verbs which come with particles. The term phrasal verb was proposed by the Great English Grammarian Logan Pearsal Smith. However, the term itself comes up with argumentation by some grammarians. Some think that when there is no logical combination between the verb and its particle, which leads to different meanings as figurative, metaphorical, or idiomatic, it should be called phrasal verb (Yahia, 2010). Phrasal verbs are limitless group of verbs that are combined to a series of short adverbs or prepositions to create a new type of verbs with new subtle meaning from their original components (ibid). For instance:

Verb with preposition
- look after
- Take care

Verb with adverb
- Leave quickly
- Fly away

Verb with Preposition and Adverb
- Put up with
- look up to

Types of phrasal verbs
While phrasal verbs include the same components and structures, they are usually classified into four types.
Transitive phrasal verbs
In this type of phrasal verb, the verb has an object, which infers their separability; in other words, verbs and particles can be separated.
Examples:
He did not know what the word meant so he *looked up* the word in the dictionary.
He did not know what the word meant so he *looked* the word *up* in the dictionary.
He did not know what the word meant so he *looked* it *up* in the dictionary (Brinton, 2000).
Intransitive phrasal verbs
Some phrasal verbs are intransitive. It means that the verb needs no object. Therefore, it is possible to use such elements in sentences on their own, or we can add further information to the sentence or structure. However, there is only one restriction concerning separation, we cannot separate verbs and their particles.
Examples:
The plane *took off*.
The plane *took off* at 4 pm.
The plane *took off* without me on it (Brinton, 2000).
Transitive inseparable phrasal verbs
Transitive inseparable phrasal verbs indicate that it is impossible to place a word between the verb and its particle. For example:
I am *looking for* Lee.

I am *looking for* him (Brinton, 2000).

Inseparable phrasal verbs

Since Inseparable phrasal verbs have two particles following the verb, they are inseparable.

Example:

I am really *looking forwards* to my holiday next year, as I have not *been away* for ages (Brinton, 2000).

Phrasal verbs can be regarded as the most generative resources of English because new concepts can be made easily by connecting particles to verbs. For example, the word *dumb* creates its own verb, which is much more used in America nowadays as *dumb down* that means make a person more stupid (Cubillo, 2002, p. 98). Since such elements are most frequently used in magazines, newspapers, on televisions, and radios, where students mostly face them, they could not infer the message in any of the above series if they contain phrasal verbs. Therefore, students need to improve their knowledge of phrasal verbs to improve their reading, listening, and writing skills (Cook, 1964).

The present study is an attempt to address the issues mentioned above by examining if there is any significant difference between input-based and output-based language teaching in learning phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners. The study also aims to investigate the difference between Iranian male and female learners regarding input-based and output-based language teaching.

Relevant Previous Studies

One of the strongest proponents of input as a means of SLA has been Krashen (1982, 1985, and 1991). In formulation of his input hypothesis he has stated that "we acquire language by understanding messages, that "comprehensible input" is the essential environmental ingredient in language acquisition. Comprehensible input is necessary for language acquisition, but is not sufficient." (Krashen, 1991, p. 409). In contrast to input-directed instructions, there are some researchers who rejected the idea that input alone is enough for language acquisition and insists on the important role of output-based instruction for language acquisition (Rassaei, 2012). Swain (1985, 1998, 2005) described her output-based hypothesis as important as input in promoting L2 knowledge to high levels of target-like precision. She noted that producing the target language causes learners focus their attention on the ways required for conveying what they intend (cited in Rassaei, 2012). A few studies have investigated the effectiveness of input-based and output-based language teaching in the area of SLA. Some of them which are more relevant to the present study are mentioned here chronologically.

Benati (2005) compared the effectiveness of processing instruction, traditional instruction, and meaningful output-based instruction on linguistic development of the English simple past tense for secondary school participants. Processing instruction and meaningful output-based instruction were matched on all variables except for mode of practice, whereas traditional instruction differed in that (a) it did not provide information on processing strategy and (b) only half of the practice provided was meaningful. Analyses indicated that all groups improved on both interpretation and production. Furthermore, for interpretation, processing instruction outperformed both traditional instruction and meaningful output-based instruction, whereas for production, all groups performed similarly. Benati concluded that processing instruction has a positive effect on learners' developing systems and suggested that although output plays a trivial role in language acquisition, it has not much effect on implicit system.

In their study, Morgan-Short and Bowden (2006) investigated the effects of meaningful input- and output-based practice on SLA. They selected first-semester Spanish students (n = 45) which were assigned to processing instruction, meaningful output-based instruction and control groups. Experimental groups received the same input in instruction but received meaningful practice that was input-based or output-based. Both experimental groups showed significant gains on immediate and delayed interpretation and production tasks. Repeated-measures analyses of variance showed that, for interpretation, both experimental groups outperformed the control group. For production, only the meaningful output-based group outperformed the control group. These results suggest that not only input-based but also output-based instruction can lead to linguistic development.

Ahmadi, Ghafar Samar, and Yazdanimoghaddam (2011) examined the impact of focused tasks on the development of Iranian EFL learners' pragmatic competence. To this end, they compared the effectiveness of the dictogloss as an output-based task and the consciousness-raising as an input-based task in teaching English requestivedowngraders. Prior to the experiment, 147 Iranian EFL learners participated in the study to develop the instruments. Also, 43 American native English speakers provided the baseline data for the construction of the recognition test and the instructional treatment. They matched 60 Iranian EFL learners in two groups based on their scores on the Oxford Placement

Test (2004). The results revealed that neither the effects of instructional treatment nor the effects of time were significant between the groups on pragmatic measures. The findings also demonstrated that participants in both tasks preformed significantly better in the immediate and delayed post-tests than in the pre-test.

In order to examine the effects of input-based and output-based instruction on l2 development, Rassaei (2012) conducted a study the Participants of which included 129 third-semester Persian learners of English enrolled in 5 intact EFL classrooms functioning as four experimental groups and one control group. Two experimental groups received two types of input-based instruction; participants in another experimental group received instruction that required them to produce meaningful output, and the last experimental group only received explicit instruction about target structures. The results of grammaticality judgment, multiple choice grammar, and written production tests administered as pre-test, immediate and delayed post-tests suggested that both input-based and output-based instruction can lead to the development of L2 knowledge. The findings also supported the claim that output-based instruction can be more effective than input-based instruction. With regards to input-based instruction, the results indicated that exposure to input alone is not enough to promote the development of L2 knowledge and some form of intervention (such as textual enhancement or explicit instruction) is needed to make input more salient to learners.

Taghvaee (2013) explored the impact of individual and collaborative output-based pedagogical approaches on learning English requests by Iranian EFL learners. In this study, he also investigated whether there was any significant difference between Iranian male and female learners regarding individual and collaborative output-based language teaching. Seventy six pre-intermediate English learners participated in the study, thirty three of whom were males and forty three of whom were females with an age range of 20 to 40 years old. Data analysis indicated that collaborative pair work did not significantly lead to better learning of the English requests. In addition, the results suggested that there was no significant difference between male and female Iranian EFL learners in both individual and collaborative output-based language teaching groups.

To sum up, as mentioned in the review of literature, input-based and output-based approach proved to have significant effects on language acquisition and that, to some extent, they have different influences on learning, interpreting, and production of some variables such as vocabulary and grammar. As seen in the previous studies on input-based and output-based instructions, there was contradiction in the results on the superiority of the effects of input and output-based approaches. Although the overall design of the current study was similar to the previous research reviewed, to the researcher's knowledge, no research has been done to investigate the difference between input-based and output-based language teaching in learning phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners. Furthermore, few studies have examined the difference between genders in terms of input-based and output-based instructions. Therefore, the present study intends to find out if there is any significant difference between input-based and output-based language teaching in learning phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners. The study also aims to find whether there is any significant difference between genders regarding input-based and output-based teaching of English phrasal verbs.

Statement of the Problem, Purpose, and Significance of the Study

Although much attention has been paid to the significance of input matters in SLA, the issue of how exactly input affects L2 learning is still controversial. SLA researchers who see L2 learner as capable of unconsciously converting what is heard into a linguistic system take it for granted that acquisition will occur (Piske& Young-Scholten, 2009). For some decades, the focus of researchers and teachers has been on input-based language teaching and its effects in this field. Some years later, some researchers (e.g., Swain, 1985) highlighted the effectiveness of output-based language teaching without rejecting the significant role of input. So far, this issue has been one of the controversial topics in language teaching and no one could strongly claim which one outweighs the other. Some studies have also been conducted about the comparison between these two instructions, input-based and output-based; it is still controversial which type of instruction is more beneficial in language teaching. The present study tries to do its best to clarify this contentious issue which has not been paid attention nationwide. Therefore, this study is an attempt to find out if there is any significant difference between input-based and output-based language teaching in learning phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners. The study also examines the difference between the two variables in teaching phrasal verbs regarding genders.

The present study may be useful especially for teachers and researchers who are still in doubt which type of instruction, input-based or output-based, is more beneficial in language teaching. The results of the study may be particularly helpful for language teachers since it paves the way for them to

judiciously choose the best type of instruction and take full advantage of the time of their classes to teach their students. Moreover, it may help material designers in the amount of language input and also of output activities they incorporate in their textbooks. The study, therefore, seeks answers to the following research questions:

Question 1: Is there any significant difference between input-based and output-based language teaching in learning English phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners?

Question 2: Is there any significant difference between Iranian EFL male and female learners regarding output-based teaching of English phrasal verbs?

Question 3: Is there any significant difference between Iranian EFL male and female learners regarding input-based teaching of English phrasal verbs?

Methodology
Participants

The participants of this study were seventy-three students who enrolled in Mehravaran English Institute in Torbat-e-Jaam. Thirty four of the participants were male and thirty nine of them were female students with an age range of 17 to 28 years old. They were upper-intermediate adult learners who were taught *American English file* (book 3). They were divided into two intact groups**.** The sampling process is based on convenience sampling, due to availability reasons.

Instrumentation and Procedure

The instruments employed in this study to gather the data were Nelson Proficiency Test and Test of Phrasal verbs.

In order to make sure that all the participants are at the same level in terms of their language proficiency, a 50-item Nelson English Language Proficiency Test (section 300D) was used. This multiple-choice test comprised cloze passages, vocabulary, structure, and pronunciation. The English language proficiency test used in the present study was adopted from Fowler and Coe (1978). The overall internal consistency of this proficiency test was determined by Hashemian, Roohani and Fadaei (2012) using Cronbach Alpha (CA) and it turned out to be was 0.82, which is an acceptable and high index of reliability.

The second instrument chosen for data collection in the present study was a Test of Phrasal Verbs. The test consisted of thirty sentences designed to elicit the correct phrasal verbs. Within each sentence appeared an empty slot for writing the appropriate response. The Test of Phrasal Verbs used in this study consisted of the sentences which were extracted from McCarthy and O'Dell (2007) and Gairns and Redman (2011). They were selected randomly by the researcher to test the phrasal verbs which were going to be taught. In order to make certain that the devised Test of Phrasal Verbs used in this study is reliable, the researcher estimated its post-test reliability. KR-21 formula was used for the computation of the internal consistency of the test. The reliability index for the Test of Phrasal Verbs in this study was found to be 0.78, which is considered an acceptable reliability.

Data Collection Procedure

The procedure used for conducting the study is presented in the following sections.

Data collection

The data collection for this study began in winter, 2015, at Mehravaran English Institute in Torbat-e-Jaam. Two intact groups were used to compare the effectiveness of input-based and output-based language teaching. In order to feel certain that all the students are at the same level of language proficiency, Nelson Proficiency Test was administered at the very beginning in one session. Before starting the instruction, the participants were given the Test of Phrasal Verbs as a pre-test. The session after the pre-test, the researcher started to teach both groups. One group received input-based approach for teaching English phrasal verbs and the other group was taught output-based language teaching for teaching the same phrasal verbs. Each group received thirteen sessions of instruction (each session 45 minutes),In each session, American English file book was taught to learners and at the last 15 minutes for input group and 25 minutes for output group, the researcher taught five chosen phrasal verbs to learners. The input group sessions were held on odd days and the output one on even days. Fifty phrasal verbs were chosen to be taught in each session only five phrasal verbs were taught to each group and after three sessions the previously taught phrasal verbs were reviewed in the next session.

The participants of the group which received input-based language teaching were provided with plenty of information. The researcher explained the definition of the phrasal verb, accompanied with some examples. All the examples used for teaching were different from the ones in the pre- and

post-test. The participants were not asked to produce the phrasal verbs which were taught to them, neither in speaking nor in writing. The first session of teaching phrasal verbs for input group was as such. In the second session of instruction, when teaching the books finished, the researcher wrote "keep sth up" on the board and asked the learners to repeat this phrasal verb after me. Then I wrote its definition; "to continue doing something", accompanied with 3 examples as below:

1. I don't think I can keep this up any longer.
2. You must eat to keep your strength up.
3. Although it was hard, they kept their friendship up.

At last I asked the learners to write the phrasal verb, its definition and also the written examples in their notebooks and review them in their homes. I taught 4 other phrasal verbs in the same way for this group.

The other group which was taught through output-based language teaching was taught the same phrasal verbs. The researcher explained the definition of the phrasal verb, accompanied with many examples. In this group, in addition to giving plenty input to learners, the researcher gave participants a situation and asked them to use the appropriate phrasal verb for the given situation orally or in written form. All the situations used for practice were different from the ones in the pre- and post-test. The first session of teaching phrasal verbs for output group was as such. The second session of instruction was performed like the second session of input group. After teaching 5 phrasal verbs, I wrote some sentences with a blank in them, and wanted learners to tell me which one of the 5 phrasal verbs which they have learned in this session is appropriate in those blanks. Then I asked if anyone can make a sentence using one of these phrasal verbs. I explained that their answer won't have any effect on their point in this course and there is no force to answer these questions, so they answered the questions without any anxiety.

At the end of the course, in fourteenth session, a post-test, which was exactly the same as the pre-test, was administered to both groups. After collecting the data, appropriate statistical tests were used to find out the significance of the results.

Results
The Homogeneity of the Two Groups

In order to make sure that all the participants are homogeneous in terms of language proficiency, Nelson Proficiency Test was administered at the beginning to the both groups. The descriptive statistics of proficiency test for both groups are shown in table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for proficiency test of the input and output groups

	method	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
proficiency	input	35	34.23	3.77	.64
	output	38	35.00	2.86	.46

As given in Table 1, for the input group, the mean score was 34.23 and the SD was 3.77 and for the output group, the mean score was 35.00 and the SD was 2.86. Since the means cannot show the actual difference between the groups, an independent-sample *t*-test was manipulated as presented in table 2 to show the real discrepancy.

Table 2. Independent-samples *t*-test: the input group proficiency test vs. the output group proficiency test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
proficiency	Equal variances assumed	4.81	.03	-.99	71	.33
	Equal variances not assumed			-.98	63.2	.33

Table 2 shows there was no statistical difference between the groups, *t* (63.2) = - 0.98, *p* = 0.33. As a result, no significant difference was detected between the learners' mean scores in the proficiency test within the input and output groups; therefore, the participants of the input and output groups were most probably homogeneous.

The Results Concerning the First Research Question

In order to answer the first research question, descriptive statistics for the input and output groups' gain scores is conducted in table 3 below.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for the input and output groups' gain scores

	method	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Gain score	input	35	13.03	6.49	1.10
	output	38	15.79	4.93	.80

As indicated in Table 3, for the input group, the mean score was 13.03 and the SD was 6.49 and for the output group, the mean score was 15.79 and the SD was 4.93. Apparently, there was a difference between the means of the input and output groups. To make sure whether there is any significant difference between the mean scores of the input- and output-based language teaching groups, the researcher ran an independent sample *t*-test to reveal this difference. Table 4 demonstrates the result of the independent-samples *t*-test.

Table 4. Independent-samples *t*-test: the output group's gain scores vs. the input group's gain scores

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gain score	Equal variances assumed	1.46	.23	-2.06	71	.04
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.03	63.34	.04

As it is demonstrated in the Table 4, there was a statistical difference between groups, t (71) = - 2.06, p = 0.04. It was concluded that there is a significant difference between the input-based and output-based language teaching in learning English phrasal verbs by upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners i.e. the output group outperformed the input one in learning English phrasal verbs.

The Results Concerning the Second Research Question

First of all, descriptive statistics of the gain scores of both genders in output-based language teaching group are calculated and shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for males' and females' gain scores in the output group

	Output-gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
output	male	18	14.72	4.57	1.08
	female	20	16.75	5.16	1.15

As it is indicated in Table 5, for the males in the output group, the mean score was 14.72 and the SD was 4.57 and for the females, the mean score was 16.75 and the SD was 5.16. Thus, it seems there is a difference between genders. In order to achieve certainty, an independent-sample t-test was conducted to find out if this difference between the genders in the output-based language teaching group is significant or not. Table 6 demonstrates the results of the independent-samples t-test in the following.

Table 6. Independent-samples t-test: males' gain scores vs. females' gain scores in the output group

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Output	Equal variances assumed			-1.28	36	.21
	Equal variances not assumed	.20	.65	-1.28	36	.21

As it is displayed in the Table 6, there was no significant difference between genders' gain scores, t (36) = - 1.28, p = 0.21. Therefore, there is no significant difference between Iranian EFL male and female students regarding output-based teaching of English phrasal verbs.

The Results Concerning the Third Research Question

In order to reach an answer regarding the third research question, the steps of the second research question are followed. That is, first a descriptive statistics to show difference and then an independent sample t-test to confirm or reject the difference. The descriptive statistics of the gain scores of both genders in input-based group are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for males' and females' gain scores in input group

	Input gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
input	male	16	12.44	7.09	1.78
	female	19	13.53	6.09	1.40

As it is indicated in table 7, for males in the input group, the mean score was 12.44 and the SD was 7.09 and for females, the mean score was 13.53 and the SD was 6.09. Therefore, the difference has been observed. To confirm this difference, an independent-sample *t*-test was run. Table 8 reveals the result of the independent-samples *t*-test.

Table 8. Independent-samples t-test: males gain scores vs. females gain scores in the input group

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Input	Equal variances assumed	1.12	.30	-.49	33	.63
	Equal variances not assumed			-.48	20	.63

As it is shown in the Table 8, there was no statistical difference between males and females, t (33) = - 0.49, p = 0.63. Therefore, there is no significant difference between Iranian EFL male and female students regarding input-based teaching of English phrasal verbs.

Discussion

Regarding the first research question, it was revealed that the participants' performance in the input-based and output-based language teaching groups showed a significant difference. Thus, the results of this study indicated that the learners who participated in the output-based language teaching group performed significantly better on the Test of Phrasal Verbs than those who received input-based language teaching. The obtained findings are consistent with the results of Morgan-Short and Bowden (2006) who indicated that both experimental groups showed significant gains on immediate and delayed interpretation and production tasks. For production, only the meaningful output-based group outperformed the control group, which is in line with the findings of this study. However, the findings of this study do not support the findings of Ahmadi et al., (2011) who found that neither the effects of instructional treatment nor the effects of time were significant between the groups on pragmatic measures. In addition, the findings of the present study are not compatible with Benati (2005) who revealed that all the groups improved on both interpretation and production; for interpretation, processing instruction outperformed both traditional instruction and meaningful output-based instruction, whereas for production, all groups performed similarly. There might be some reasons to explain the present study's results. One reason might be related to the participants' practices for producing the target forms in output-based group which helped them to perform better in the Test of Phrasal Verbs. Another reason might be related to the kind of excitements participants had in output-based class. Since the learners had to be active to produce the language, they did not feel bored in class and probably took more advantage of the class.

The results obtained for the second research question revealed no significant difference between the males and the females in the output-based language teaching group. In other words, the findings did not support the presumed difference between the males and the females in terms of their performance in the Test of Phrasal Verbs. Although the females gave a slightly better performance on the test than the males, the difference was not statistically significant. These findings, regarding the

difference between males and females, are in line with the results of Taghvaee (2013) who found that there was no significant difference between male and female Iranian EFL learners in both individual and collaborative output-based language teaching groups. The reason that can be given for the findings of this study may be the learners' current educational learning context in Iran, in which coeducation is not allowed. Since the participants did not have much experience in mixed classes, they might have had some kinds of stress or might have felt embarrassment which could affect their performance in the class.

The third research question proposed to find out the differences between males and females in input-based language teaching group also indicated no significant difference between the males and females in the input-based language teaching group. In other words, the findings do not support the presumed difference between males and females regarding input based language teaching. Although the females slightly outperformed the males on the test, the difference was not statistically significant. To the researcher's knowledge, no study has investigated the difference between male and female learners in the domain of input-based teaching of English to compare its results with the findings of the present study. However, the reason why this difference is not significant may be attributed to the students' level of education. It may also be due to the kind of input they received. If they were likely to be instructed though other input-based treatments, the study may obtained results other than the results of the current study.

Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Research

The present study was an attempt to make students aware of the ways they learn through input-based and output-based approaches. In the light of the findings in the present study, the positive effects of input-based and output-based on EFL learners' phrasal verbs were demonstrated. Although, the instructional benefits of both approaches should be accepted in learners' underlying system, the findings of the current study clarified that a significant difference between input-based and output-based instruction in teaching phrasal verbs was observed. That is, output-based language teaching outperformed input-based language teaching and leads to better learning of the English phrasal verbs. The results also showed that there was no significant difference between male and female Iranian EFL learners in input and output-based teaching of English phrasal verbs. That is, input- and output-based instructions had no effect on genders in learning phrasal verbs.Therefore, the obvious conclusion is that the application of output-based treatment has helped the participants to perform better in learning phrasal verbs. It is also important for researchers and practitioners to take output-based instruction and its effectiveness into consideration and that input-based instruction may be necessary but it is not sufficient.

Due to the insufficiency of the present study, some suggestions are offered for future research. The first thing is obviously a replication of the present study in wider and more diverse EFL contexts and more sample than those in this study to confirm or expand upon the findings of this study. Second, the scope of this study was limited to Iranian EFL upper-intermediate adult learners. For future studies other researchers may find it interesting to conduct it with higher levels of education, that is, students with bachelor's degree, master's degrees or doctoral degrees. Third, as mentioned before, the current study was done in an EFL context with EFL learners. A replication of the study can be carried out in ESL context with ESL learners. Furthermore, comparative studies can be conducted to see if there are any differences between ESL and EFL contexts in terms of input-based and output-based language teaching.

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