**The effect of focused tasks on developing Persian EFL learners’ interlanguage: the case of obligatory null objects**

The present study investigated the effectiveness of input-based vs. output-based practice on acquisition of obligatory null objects in English complex infinitival structures. The participants were fifty seven Persian learners, divided into three groups (input-based, output-based and control), who received explicit instruction and task based practice for three weeks. Analysis of the immediate and delayed post-tests showed similar levels of effects for both types of activity on improving learners’ receptive knowledge while the output-based group had better performance in developing learners’ productive knowledge (using null objects in the target structures). Furthermore, retention of effects was observed in the performance of the output group on both measures of delayed post-test. The implications of the study for teaching complex structures susceptible to get fossilized will be discussed.

*Keywords:* Focused tasks, Input-based practice, Output-based practice, obligatory null objects