

# FOCUS ON FORM: A CRITICAL REVIEW

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## KEY TERMS

### Focus on Form (FonF)

*FonF is an approach in which learners' attention is attracted to linguistic forms as they are performing the tasks*

### 'Focus on forms' (FonFs)

*FonFs is an approach in which specific linguistic forms are taught directly and explicitly*

## WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM THIS SECONDARY RESEARCH?

- The background and the current state of FonF research
- A detailed account of FonF

## WHAT DOES IT FIND?

- FonF should be treated as a procedure rather than an approach
- Asking learners to repeat the task can improve FonF
- FonF can be either pre-planned (addressing a pre-determined linguistic feature) or incidental (as a response to communicative or linguistic problems)
- There are two types of FonF:
  - 1) Reactive (conversational or didactic), and
  - 2) Pre-emptive (student-initiated or teacher-initiated)
- In FonF activities, the attention is on meaning, but from time to time the attention can be on linguistic forms

## HOW CAN I USE THE FINDINGS IN MY TEACHING?

- In grammar lessons, in addition to explicit instruction of grammatical rules, teachers can consider incorporating meaning-focused tasks to help learners utilise their existing linguistic resources and discover new grammatical principles
- Meaning-focused language tasks are not only speaking tasks; they are carefully conceived receptive and / or productive tasks which elicit specific linguistic features