A Comparative Study of Recast vs. Explicit and Intensive vs. Extensive Correction Regarding Speaking Ability

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Abstract

The current study explored the effectiveness of oral recast versus explicit correction when provided intensively and extensively. The main purpose was on the impacts of feedback in learning English. Intensive recasts are known as those given feedbacks on a specific subject while extensive feedback is known as errors on different subjects and areas. Forty students from an institute in Shiraz were divided into four classes of ten students. The instruments used in this study were a general English book, named Top Notch 2A book, a storybook, and an English grammar book, named Grammar in Use. They received explicit or implicit and intensive or extensive feedbacks according to the objectives of the study. The results indicated that there was not much difference among students who received explicit and implicit feedback. It was also found that all the methods affect students' speaking ability in the same way.

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Introduction

In the past decade, many researchers have investigated the efficiency of oral corrective feedback. The aggregation of theories in this area requires an accumulated inquiry examining the effectiveness of oral CF in different research studies and revealing diverse components affecting its effectiveness. (Li, 2010). A prevalent taxonomy of corrective feedback types is to distinguish feedback in terms of how implicit or explicit it is. One of the most significant factors that affect the effectiveness of oral corrective feedback is the implicitness or explicitness of the feedback. Within the case of implicit feedback, no obvious marker exists for mistakes that have been committed, whereas some overt markers exist in explicit feedback types (Yang, 2008). Implicit feedback frequently appears in the shape of recasts (Long, 1996; Long & Robinson, 1998; Lyster, 2001), whereas explicit feedback appears in the shape of explicit correction (Carroll & Swain, 1993; Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006). There are some controversies in the effectiveness of implicit correction or explicit correction among the researchers. For instance, according to the findings of descriptive research (e.g., Lyster, 2001; Panova & Lyster, 2002, Lyster ,1998), even though recasts present conceivable examples of a second language "recasts do not convey to learners what is unacceptable in the language," especially when recasts are given in communicative settings (p. 75). On the other hand, DeKeyser (1993) indicated that more capable students take more advantage of explicit correction. Another important issue in the field of the effectiveness of oral corrective feedback is the extensive or intensive type of corrective feedback. In recent years, the study of extensive and intensive corrective feedback has become a critical perspective of the effectiveness of corrective feedback. Some researchers create a distinction between two types: extensive feedback refers to feedback given to a broad area of errors (Ellis & Sheen, 2006; Hawkes & Nassaji, 2016) whereas the intensive type of feedback is given to a specific subject or area (e.g., Ellis, 2001). Doughty (2001), for instance, indicated that recast is more effective on a single subject. Although different empirical studies have insisted on the effectiveness of the intensive type, some studies pointed to the effectiveness of the extensive type (Loewen, 2005; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Nassaji, 2009). For instance, Loewen (2005) in his study, claimed that students could review and rectify the mistakes

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focused on by the extensive type of feedback about 60% of the time one day after the interaction that was considered as immediate posttest and 50% of the time two weeks later which was considered as the delayed posttest (Loewen & Philp, 2006).

Literature Review

Corrective feedback

Corrective feedback refers to a broad area of practice within the sector of learning and instruction. It commonly points to a learner receiving formal or informal feedback about his output by a tutor or peer(s) (Ellis, Erlam, & Loewen, 2006). The effectiveness of corrective feedback is generally inferable to the entailment of its negative evidence. According to Gass, Mackey, and Pica (1998), learners face two kinds of input: negative evidence and positive evidence. Positive evidence acquaints students with what is eligible in the second language that includes "the set of well-formed sentences to which learners are exposed" (p. 36), whereas negative evidence acquaints students with incorrect information of second or foreign language structure and is determined through presenting corrective feedback in replying to the student's non-target like L2 output. (Basmenj, 2019).

Negative feedback used as a synonym for corrective feedback and error correction has been described as information presented to learners about the errors of their L2 output. Feedback may happen in reply to learners' verbal or written output, with verbal feedback happening instantly in an interaction whereas written feedback is usually given some time after content has been made (Aravena, 2015). Many researchers contended that both SLA and FLA depend exclusively on positive evidence and negative evidence can have adverse effects on acquisition (Schwartz, 1993; Truscott, 2007). L2 teachers should try to maximize positive evidence that students confront. However, few investigations about French immersion programs in Canada (Swain, 1985) revealed that although students faced with target language for many years, their interlanguage had some potential problems in grammar. The failure of such programs was related to the unavailability of negative evidence for the students.

Schmidt's (1990, 2001) also pointed to the role of CF in the noticing hypothesis. He argued that, unlike first language acquisition, second language acquisition is automatic and completely

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conscious. An important way to enhance learners' attention to the form of linguistic items is to use corrective feedback. Moreover, the impacts of feedback can be deduced through uptake, which alludes to student's reactions to received CF presenting after an error (Loewen, 2004; Sheen, 2006).

Feedback may happen in reaction to learners' verbal or written output that verbal feedback usually happening as an immediate response in a conversation while written feedback is usually postponed and occurs after writing a text. (Arvana, 2015). Some researchers contended that only positive feedback can affect second language acquisition and negative feedback can be harmful for second language acquisition (Krashen, 1981; Schwartz, 1993; Truscott, 2007).

Oral Corrective Feedback

Oral Corrective feedback refers to instructors, partners, or audiences' oral responses to learners' mistakes of the second language (L2) production. It consists of different types, which are either explicit or implicit. Lyster and Ranta (1997, p. 46) identified six types of corrective strategy:

1. An explicit correction that referred to the explicit revision of mistakes in a direct manner.

2. Recast, which involves the way of revising students' mistakes without obstructing communication.

3. Clarification requests show that audiences (instructor /students) do not understand the students' output and a revision of form or repetition is needed (Spada & Frohlich, 1995). This type of corrective feedback is used in problems about accuracy or comprehensibility. Feedback is coded as clarification requests only when some moves, such as "excuse me?" follow a student error. Another example is asking the student to repeat her/his sentence.

4. Metalinguistic feedback includes information, comments, or questions that are related to the correct form of students' sentences or utterances without pointing to the correct form explicitly. Metalinguistic comments indicate that there might be an error (e.g., "an error committed here," "can you recognize that?"). Metalinguistic information "generally provides either some grammatical metalanguage that refers to the nature of the error" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 47) (e.g., "It's masculine") or may appear as a lexical error about the definition of the word. Metalinguistic

questions also" point to the nature of the error but attempt to elicit the information from the student" (e.g., "Is it a bird?"). (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 47).

5. Elicitation points to methods that instructors employ to elicit the correct form of the utterance or sentence from students' output. To perform elicitation techniques, teachers try to elicit the rest of their sentences by a strategy called pausing and wait for the students' response to complete the sentence (e.g., "this is..."). Some metalinguistic comments may come before the elicitation strategy (e.g., no john is not here. He is…).

6. Repetition refers to the situation in which teachers repeat the students' false utterances and tries to attract the attention of students by changing intonation. Sometimes teachers change their intonation to indicate the errors.

Studies on Comparing Explicit vs. Implicit Oral CF

Different studies questioned the contribution of explicit and implicit feedback to language acquisition (Nicholas, Lightbown, & Spada, 2001; Ellis, 2005). In general, studies about recast feedback revealed that this type of implicit feedback can be helpful when they are more explicit. (e.g. Doughty & Varela, 1998). Some other studies argued that explicit feedback is valuable. Carroll, Roberge, and Swain (1992), for instance, investigated a group working on two types of French suffixes (-age and -ment) found that a group that received explicit corrective feedback outperformed the other group that received no feedback.

Gertraud and Hermann (2001) claimed that explicit feedback had a higher level of efficacy than implicit feedback in their classrooms. DeKeyser (1993) indicated that learners with higher levels of proficiency gain more advantage of explicit feedback than students of lower proficiency levels. In contrast, in another study related to input-processing instruction, feedback was considered as a part of it (Sanz, 2003), no difference was observed between explicit correction and recast as two types of corrective feedback. There is a contradiction between the effectiveness of these kinds of feedback among the researchers which needs more investigation.

Extensive vs. intensive CF

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Researchers have created discrimination between intensive and extensive feedback. Extensive feedback is given in response to a different and large area of errors (Ellis, 2001; Ellis & Sheen, 2006; Hawkes & Nassaji, 2016) whereas intensive feedback is given in response to a specific subject or area of error (e.g., Ellis, 2001). Ellis, Murakami, Sheen, and Takashima (2008), investigated the effects of intensive (focused) and extensive (unfocused) forms of corrective feedback on writing accuracy. They argued that intensive type of feedback refers to feedback presented in response to a single error and extensive type of feedback refers to feedback presented in response to a broad area of errors. Using a narrative task and an error correction test, both types of feedback had the same results. Sheen, Wright, and Moldawa (2009) analyzed four groups of language learners: one group was treated with intensive feedback, one group was treated with extensive form of feedback, a practice group, and a control group. An improvement was observed in all groups but the intensive group outperformed others and had a higher level of improvement. Different shreds of evidence believed that intensive feedback is more useful than extensive feedback. Learners are more willing to take part in a single subject error correction and are more convenient in understanding the nature of the error. "If attention and understanding are important for acquisition, as cognitive theories of L2 acquisition have claimed, then intensive CF is better equipped to produce positive results". (Ellis, et al, 2008, p. 356). In another study, Kamiya (2015) investigated the effects of intensive type of corrective feedback and extensive type of corrective feedback on learning unreal conditioning. Not many distinctions were found between the impacts of two types of feedback on the accuracy of sentence structures, although the tendency was for higher efficacy of intensive feedback. Yet, there is a controversy among the researchers in the effectiveness of extensive vs. intensive feedback.

Studies on Effectiveness of Recast vs. Explicit Correction

Several studies emphasized that explicit feedback is more effective than recast (Carroll & Swain, 1993; Ellis, 2007; Ellis et al., 2006; Sheen, 2007). For instance, Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006) investigated a pre-test, post-test quasi-experimental experiment and compared two types of explicit correction and implicit correction (i.e., recast) (Yilmaz, 2012). In some other studies, no difference was found between recast and explicit correction (Loewen & Nabei, 2007; Loewen &

Erlam, 2006; Sauro, 2009). Carroll (2001) argued that the best kind of CF is that there is no room for inference. Therefore, explicit types of corrective feedback are more successful because they are easier for students to be recognized and found. These characteristics argue for explicit correction (Carroll, 2001).

Gap

In sum, the studies comparing recast and explicit oral CF have mainly focused on the general effectiveness of explicit oral corrective feedback and recast corrective feedback. However, only a few studies have examined the effectiveness of recast correction vs. explicit correction intensively and extensively. The existing studies have mainly focused on written CF. There is an urgent need for studies that compare intensive and extensive CF more precisely in the oral context. As a result, the current study was conducted to investigate this subject and two research questions were proposed:

1. Do recast and explicit correction contribute to improving the speaking ability of students?

2. Which type of corrective feedback (i.e. extensive and intensive), is more suitable for the speaking ability of students?

Method

Participants

This study was carried out in an English institute in Shiraz, Iran. The participants of the study were divided into four classes of ten students, each with different students of both genders in an intermediate level based on the Institude placement test. The same teacher taught all four classes. All the students were teenagers between 12 to 16 years old.

Instruments

In this study, a general English book, named *Top Notch 2A* was used. The teacher worked on a storybook and a grammar book, named grammar in use with their audios. forty students were divided into four classes. Each class consisted of ten students. Two classes were taught based on recast and two classes were taught based on an explicit correction. For each method, one group was treated intensively and the other was treated extensively.

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Data Collection Procedure

Students started to work on a general English book, entitled, Top Notch 2A (as the main book), a storybook, and a grammar book, entitled, Grammar in Use. In the first class, the intensive recast group, that worked only on a specific topic or material, received implicit feedback only on the errors of oral production related to the main book. Students started reading the book and the teacher asked them to talk about the topic. If the teacher saw any problem, he would give feedback to the students in an implicit way orally. In the second class, the teacher provided implicit extensive feedback to the students (i.e., feedback on different topics and materials). Students read the materials and they listened to the audio files of each material at home. When they came to the class, the teacher asked them to discuss the topics orally. Then, this group received feedback on all the linguistic materials (main book, storybook, and the Grammar in Use) in an orally implicit way. In the third class, students received intensive explicit feedback. Students read the main book and the teacher asked them to discuss the topic orally in pairs. Whilst the students were discussing the topic, the teacher observed their errors and gave oral feedback explicitly. In this class, the teacher gave them feedback only on the main book in an explicit way. In the fourth class, the students received extensive explicit feedback from the teacher. Students worked on all the materials and they were treated explicitly. At the end of the course, the teacher took a speaking test to see the results of the instruction.

Data Analysis

In the data analysis section, our data set was analyzed by using SPSS 22. Descriptive statistics were analyzed to evaluate the mean and standard deviation of research variables. A two-way ANOVA between the groups was conducted to explore the impact of extensive/intensive and recast/explicit correction on the speaking ability of students.

Results

The mean and standard deviation for the recast group in intensive conditions were 17.9 and1.19, respectively. The mean and standard deviation for the explicit correction group in intensive conditions were 14.9 and 1.37, respectively. The mean and standard deviation for the

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recast group in extensive conditions were 15.6 and 1.57, respectively. The mean and standard deviation for explicit correction in extensive conditions were 14.8 and 2.34, respectively. Participants were divided into four groups according to the method they were instructed by (group A: recast intensive, group B: recast extensive, group C: explicit intensive, group D: explicit extensive). The interaction effect between extensive/intensive and recast/explicit correction was statistically significant (the sig. value is 0.04, which is below 0.05). Likewise, there is a significant main effect for recast/explicit (the sig. value is 0.00, which is below 0.05) and extensive/intensive (the sig. value is 0.03, which is below 0.05). It means that methods do not differ in terms of the effect on the language ability of students.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics: Dependent Variable: Scores of Speaking Ability Test

Extensive/intensive	Recast/explicit	Mean	SD	N
intensive	recast	17.9000	1.19722	10
	explicit	14.9000	1.37032	10
	Total	16.4000	1.98415	20
extensive	recast	15.6000	1.57762	10
	explicit	14.8000	2.34758	10
	Total	15.2000	1.98945	20
Total	recast	16.7500	1.80278	20
	explicit	14.8500	1.87153	20
	Total	15.8000	2.05314	40

Table 2

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: Dependent Variable: Scores of Speaking Ability Test

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Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Extensive/intensive	14.400	1	14.400	5.092	.030
Recast/explicit	36.100	1	36.100	12.766	.001
Extensive/intensive*recast/explicit	12.100	1	12.100	4.279	.046
Total	10150.000	40			

a. R Squared = .381 (Adjusted R Squared = .329)

Discussion and Conclusion

The review of literature about corrective feedback shows that there are controversies among researchers about the effectiveness of different types of corrective feedback on the speaking proficiency of students. A review of the literature indicates that a number of the researchers worked on the general phenomenon of recast and explicit correction and only a few pieces of research have investigated intensive and extensive effects of feedback. The current study is different from previous studies; this study investigated different methods of corrective feedback regarding speaking ability. Ellis (2007) stated that for adult L2 learners, corrective feedback must be intensive to be efficient for their oral proficiency. In another study, an extensive recast group that covered all the errors had no significant effect on learners' fluency (Zohrabi, Farrokhi, & Chera Azad, 2017). The current study examined the effects of explicit/implicit methods and extensive/intensive methods on the speaking proficiency of students. According to the finding of the study, both recast and explicit correction can affect the speaking ability of students in a positive way. To answer which type of corrective feedback (i.e. extensive and intensive), was more suitable for the speaking ability of students, the interaction effect was statistically significant. It was revealed that all methods (recast/explicit correction, intensive/extensive) affect the speaking ability of students in almost the same way and the findings of previous researches have repeated.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Studies

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Although this study answered certain questions, it faced some limitations. First, participants were sampled from an institute in Shiraz city. Compared to university students, participants were less proficient. The findings should not be generalized to students who are studying in universities. Future studies could investigate different proficiency levels. Second, participants were teenagers, between 12 and 16 years old. Compared to older students, participants had lower background knowledge and might be less proficient. Future studies could investigate adults' proficiency levels. Finally, in the current study, recast and explicit correction were investigated as two types of corrective feedback. Other types of corrective feedback should be studied regarding speaking ability.

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