Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Division of Foreign Language Education

Department of English Language Teaching

CORRECTIVE RECAST AND PROMPT IN LEARNING L2 GRAMMAR IN EFL SETTEING

Hedayat Sarandi

A Ph. D. Dissertation

Ankara 2009

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KABUL VE ONAY

Hedayat Sarandi tarafından hazırlanan "Corrective recast and prompt in learning L2 grammar in EFL setting" başlıklı bu çalışma, 20.02.2009 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Doktora Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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Yukarıdaki imzaların adı geçen öğretim üyelerine ait olduğunu onaylarım.

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20.02.2009

_____

Hedayat Sarandi

To my parents

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I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Mehmet Çelik for his sustained support, persistent encouragement and insightful comments. His inspiration has always been an important resource during the writing of this dissertation. My heartfelt thanks also go to the esteemed members of my dissertation committee. Dr. Arif Sarıçoban whose scholarly advice and constructive comments on the main points as well as the details of the project offered invaluable insights and suggestions that helped me improve the final draft. I would also like to offer special thanks to Dr. Abdülvahit Çakır for his precious guidance as well as perceptive feedback on every stage of the writing of dissertations. I extend my gratitude to Dr. Arda Arıkan and Dr. Hüseyin Öz for their everlasting supports and their expertise in reading the dissertation and providing important feedback. I would be honored to call all these people as both my mentors as well as my friends during my Ph.D. study in Hacettepe.

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Finally, I would like to make the point that despite the help and support that I received from the people that I mentioned their names above, any shortcomings are totally my own.

ÖZET

Sarandi, Hedayat, İngilizce Dilbilgisinin Öğreniminde Düzeltme Amaçlı Tekrar ve Yönlendirme, Doktora Tezi, Ankara, 2009.

Bu yarı deneysel çalışma iki düzeltici dönüt tekniğinin (düzeltme amaçlı tekrar ve yönlendirme) İngiliz dilbilgisi geniş zaman üçüncü şahıs eki "-s" nin edinimdeki olası yararları incelemektir. Çalışma, farklı geribildirimlerin öğrencilerin dil testi başarılarına etkilerini karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Fatih Üniversitesi üç hazırlık sınıfı 39 öğrencisi kontrol ve deney gruplarına atanmış ve hedef dil kullanımının zorunlu olduğu iletişimsel görevleri tamamlamışlardır. Deney grubu düzeltici dönütü hatalı cevaplar için ya düzeltme amaçlı tekrar ya da yönlendirme yolu ile almıştır. Yönlendirme dil ötesi teknikle yapılmıştır ve yankılamanın düzeltici gücünü öğrencilere gösterebilmek için vurgulama ve tonlamadan faydalanılmıştır. Yönlendirme iki düzeltici dönüt uygulamaları olan tekrarlama ve ortaya çıkarıcı gerçekleştirilmiştir. Edinim, dilbilgisi yapı testleri ve hikaye anlatımı gereçleri kullanılarak deneyden önce, deneyden hemen sonra ve geciktirilmiş test ile deneyden 10 gün sonra olmak üzere üç aşamalı ölçülmüştür. Veri analizi, deneyden hemen sonra yapılan son testte kontrol grubu ile deney grubu arasında anlamlı bir fark göstermiştir. Fakat bu anlamlı fark geciktirilmiş son teste taşınamamıştır. Kısacası, geciktirilmiş son testte gruplar arasındaki fark sözlü ve yazılı sınavlarda istatistiki olarak manidar bulunmamıştır. Bulgular, açık yankılamanın kısa süreli etkisini ortaya koymuştur. Bu bulgular aynı zamanda zorluk derecesi yüksek olan hedef dil yapılarının üzerinde daha fazla durulması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Düzeltici dönüt, düzeltici yankılama, düzeltmesiz yankılama, belirgin / örtülü bilgi.

ABSTRACT

Sarandi, Hedayat. Corrective recast and prompt in learning L2 grammar in EFL setting, Ph.D. Dissertation, Ankara, 2009**.**

This quasi-experimental study investigates the potential benefits of two corrective feedback techniques (corrective recast and prompt) on the acquisition of third person '-s' (simple present). The study aspires to compare the possible effects of different feedback moves on the learners' performance on language tests that (at least relatively) reflect their implicit and explicit knowledge regarding the target language structure.

Thirty-nine students in three intact classes from Fatih University Prep school were assigned into two experimental groups and a control group and completed communicative tasks that made the use of target language obligatory. The experimental groups received corrective feedback either in the form of corrective recast or prompt in response to the errors that contained the target language items. The recast was operationalized through the super-segmental manipulation whereby stress and intonation were employed to make the corrective force of recast salient to the learners. Prompt was operationalized through the use of two CF moves; repetition and elicitation. Acquisition was measured through untimed grammaticality judgment tests (UGJT) and oral narration tasks that were administered prior to the instructions, immediately after the instructions and again 10 days later.

The analysis of data revealed a clear advantage for the participants in the corrective recast group over the control group on the oral measure of the immediate posttest. The superior effect of corrective recast group, however, was not carried over to the delayed posttest. No statistically significant among group differences were found for any participating groups in delayed posttest on both oral and written testing measures.

The findings attested a short run effect for the explicit recast. They also underscored the difficulty level of the target language structure suggesting that some language features are more resistant to corrective feedback and presumably needed more prolonged instruction.

Key words: corrective feedback, recast, prompt, explicit knowledge, implicit knowledge, corrective recast**.**

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets out to introduce the rationale for conducting the present study. It sketches out one of the controversial areas in the current corrective feedback (CF) studies and justifies how the results of the present research could possibly contribute to the related body of knowledge. It starts by providing a theoretical background that reveals how the research problem has come to existence. Research questions and research hypotheses are introduced subsequently. The significant of the study is explained and the areas that the findings could hopefully cast light upon are delineated in the end.

1.1. DESCRIBING THE PROBLEM

Of all different types of CF, recast has been the most popular subject for research studies. From 2001 to 2006, for example, recast articles have appeared in key SLA journals more than any other single topics (Ellis & Sheen, 2006).The high frequency of the occurrence of recast in language classes might be one of the key reasons for the ongoing interest in the study of recast. Recast is one of the most common used discoursal moves employed by teachers to draw the attention of learners to their errors. Sheen (2004), for instance, in his observation of communicative and immersion classes found that recast on its own comprised 60 % of all feedback moves. Similar observation (a 55% of recast move) was reported in Lyster and Ranta (1997).

Despite the large number of studies about recast, there is not much consistency in the way recast was operationalized. One area where such inconsistency has been observed was the various degrees with which the corrective purpose of this feedback move was brought into focal attention of learners. It is argued, for example, that recast employed in Doughty and Varela (1998) and Mackey and Philp (1998) study were relatively explicit while recast that

Lyster (2004) recorded in observations that he made in the immersion programs in Canada was implicit (Sheen, 2006). Concerns; therefore, have recently been voiced to reconsider recast from purely implicit corrective feedback into a continuum with varying degree of implicit and explicit corrective force. Sheen (ibid), for example, pointed out that "it is arguably more appropriate to think of recasts as themselves constituting an implicit/explicit continuum". Similar proposal was made by Ellis & Sheen (2006, p. 582).

There is, of course, no consensus about which type of recast, implicit or explicit is more effective to bring about change. For some (Long, 1996; Long & Robinson, 1998), it is the implicitness of recast that allows language teachers to draw the attention of learners to the language form without sacrificing the centrality of meaning. Others (Ellis, 1993; Swain, 1995, for example); however, voiced some concerns over the effectiveness of implicit recast. They claimed that explicit recast raises the consciousness of the learners towards the target structure and directly or indirectly contribute to language learning whereas implicit recast runs the risk of not being noticed as corrective by language learners. Furthermore, once recast is used in an implicit manner, it may be easily confused with other none corrective discoursal moves of teachers (Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Lyster, 1998). Explicit recast, on the other hand, seems to stand a higher chance of being noticed by language learners and submitted for future processing. The latter view appears to be in vogue in recent literature (Sheen 2006; Ellis and Sheen, 2006).

Although there is an inclination to ascribe a superior role for explicit recast, the argument made about the effectiveness of it over implicit recast is mainly theoretical and remains in need of more empirical classroom research. The point is that not all explicit recasts carry the same degree of explicitness and have the same effect on language learning. Recast in Doughty & Varela (1998), for example, was employed in overtly explicit manner and resulted in a considerable amount of improvement of learners' interlanguage in oral measures. The recast in Ellis and his colleagues (2006, p.353), though relatively explicit _ it was both partial and declarative, the two features that place a recast at explicit side of implicit and explicit continuum suggested by Sheen (2006)_ failed to lead into any

significant language development neither in immediate nor in delayed posttest. Whatever the case, it seems that there is a need for more research studies to investigate the effect of explicit recast as Sheen has pointed out;

> ….,the more salient recasts are, the more effective they are for promoting interlanguage development. However, no studies to date have demonstrated this. Thus, this claim, while theoretically viable, needs to be investigated empirically (2006, p.367).

Another related and ongoing debate in the SLA literature is whether a specific feedback type is more beneficial for L2 learning than others. While recast provides learners with targetlike forms, there are other types of corrective feedback, generally referred as prompts, by which teachers withhold the correct form and instead offer learners opportunities to do self- correction and reformulate their own responses. Prompt moves are generally grouped into four different categories: clarification request, repetition, metalinguistic clues, and elicitation (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Lyster, 1998, 2004). The present tend in SLA favor the theoretical argument that prompt can be effective since it pushes language learners to access its own resources and retrieve the targetlike forms, a process that helps the proceduralization of declarative knowledge. The effectiveness of prompt is also supported by the recent experimental and quasi-experimental classroom studies (Lyster, 2004; Ammar & Spada, 2006; Ellis, Leowen and Erlam, 2006).

Despite the findings for the superior effect of prompt in recent studies, it is not clear if the same results could be expected if the so called difficult language structures are used. The target structure employed in Ellis et al. (2006) study was simple past regular '-ed' which is relatively an easy language feature. Ammar & Spada (2006) and Ammar (2008) investigated the possessive determiner *his* and *her,* which as Ammar put, was rather easy to learn since it was non-redundant and transparent. Third person '-s', the target language feature of the present study, on the other hand, is usually recognized as (relatively) difficult language structure at least as far as the implicit knowledge of the learners are concerned (Ellis, 2006). The difficulty of learning this morpheme must be partially stemmed from its redundancy in that the use or the lack of it does not contribute to the meaning of the

message that speakers intend to convey (Dekeyser, 2005). So, in a sense, the present study also opt for comparing the effect of two seemingly effective corrective feedback moves (prompt and corrective recast) on learning a language structure that exerts a considerable amount of difficulty for language learners.

1.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

In the light of previous research studies and theoretical argument the following research questions are hence formulated;

Q1: What kind of corrective feedback (prompt or corrective recast) is more effective in helping language learners develop their explicit knowledge of third person '-s'.

Q2 What kind of corrective feedback is more effective in helping language learners develop their implicit knowledge of third person '-s'.

Q3 If there is any effect for corrective feedback in the reconstruction of the interlanguage of language learners regarding the third person '-s', will the effect last over 10 day posttest period?

There is another point that also justifies reexamining the effectiveness of prompt in the present study. Though the bulk of recent studies favor the superior effect of prompt, the number of prompt feedback used as independent variables in these studies are not identical. Ellis and his colleagues (2006) used only one prompt move: metalinguistic explanation. Ammar & Spada (2006) used three prompt moves: repetition, metalinguistic clues, and elicitation. Lyster (2004) used all four types of prompt: clarification request, repetition, metalinguistic clues, and elicitation. All three studies found significant results for the prompt group. An interesting point about these three studies is that metalinguistic feedback was present in all of them. Given the fact that a considerable number of previous studies had already found a rather decisive evidence for the efficacy of metalinguistic feedback (Carroll & Swain, 1983; Chen, 1996; Nagta, 1998; Carroll, 2001; Sanz, 2003; Rosa & Leow, 2004), it is not clear if the effectiveness of prompt in Lyster and Ammar and Spada's

studies could be exclusively attributed to the employment of metalinguistic move or other prompt strategies that they employed alongside metalinguistic feedback were also effective. The current study aspires to find out if pushing learners to self correct, in exclusion of metalinguitic information, could be equally effective.

1.3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Studies that address the effectiveness of CF in the classroom environment could offer valuable insight about the nature of classroom discourse and SLA in general. The findings of the present study could help researchers and language teachers in different ways. In a narrow sense, it aspires to help us determine the specific features that might result in the (in) effectiveness of recast, the most common used discoursal move in language classroom. The area is ripe for further research as Ammar (2008, pp.186-7) asserts

> In sum, research about the effectiveness of recasts has not yet provided clear cut evidence to support the theoretical claims that present recasts as the ideal technique to draw learners' attention to the formal properties of the language. This lack of evidence is more apparent in classroom research indicating that further research is warranted.

Our study is also a response to a call made by Russell and Spada (2006) for further studies to investigate the different variables (in our study types of feedback) that may play a role in the effectiveness of CF:

> ….. while the accumulated knowledge on the previous research on CF has laid the foundation for work in this area, much more work needs to be done…..Currently the wide range of Variables examined in CF research is spread rather thin; more work is needed to consolidate efforts and focus on CF variables that appear to be particularly fruitful for future investigation (e.g. context, type of CF, focus on CF) (2006, p.32).

Finally, it is also hoped that the findings will show us whether corrective recast and prompting learners to do self correction are effective enough to change the interlanguage of language learners with regard to so called difficult language structures. Ammar (2008) has

capsulated the significance of the study by underlining the present need of SLA studies to investigate the effect of recast and prompt on difficult structures:

> Research that investigates the effects of prompts and recasts on the acquisition of a more complex structure or more than one structure at a time is required (p. 202).

Key Words

Corrective feedback, recast, prompt, explicit knowledge, implicit knowledge, corrective recast**.**

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the previous literature relevant to the study. It offers both a broad and a narrow approach to the controversy over the efficacy of corrective feedback in second language learning. In a broader perspective, it covers the theoretical arguments that justify the use and the contribution of the corrective feedback in language classes. In the second and more specific approach, the theoretical background and the experimental and quasi-experimental studies which have directly examined the various types of corrective back are investigated. As the argument regarding the role of error correction is almost parallel in L1 and L2, and since L2 studies draw heavily on L1 findings, a brief overview of corrective feedback in L1 is mentioned first.

2.2. CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN L1

Nativists such as Chomsky set out to account for, among other things, the way L1 language learners manage to acquire their mother tongue in a relatively short period of time. They note that children acquire the abstract set of language rules in a seemingly effortless manner using a rather degenerated input. This, they argue, shows that language learning is assisted by some biological capacity, an endowed language faculty called UG. The theory underlying UG assumes that the core grammar of all languages consists of some invariant principles which are common among all languages. The immense task of learning the complicated knowledge of language is then constrained and reduced to setting some parameters with regard to specific language data that children are exposed to, i.e. their mother language (Saleemi, 1992). What entails the nativists' argument is that only positive evidence, language input, is adequate to set the required parameters and the role of negative

evidence, i.e. the indication that inappropriate use of language is unacceptable in some ways, has no direct consequences in language learning, hence the useless effect of correcting child language.

However, the argument regarding the existence and the effect of negative evidence in child-directed discourses, mainly revolving upon the role of recast on child language, is still an ongoing argument (Bohannon et al., 1996; Leeman, 2003). While the earlier studies on the discourse of caretakers and children showed that parents rarely provide explicit corrective on children ill-formed sentences (Brown and Hanlon, 1970), and that parents response on grammatical and ungrammatical sentences of children are not much different and only based on their semantic value (Demetras, Post, & Snow, 1986; Hirsh-Pasek, Treiman, & Schneiderman, 1984), the finding of several other studies turned out to discredit these initial claims. Bohannon and Stanowicz (1988), for instance, found that "adults responded differentially to children's well- and ill-formed speech in their use of repetitions and clarification questions" (p. 687), and there is an overall tendency in adults to reformulate the ungrammatical sentences of the children more than grammatical ones. Upon analysis of caretakers' responses they found that 34% of these responses were on syntactic errors, 35% on mispronunciation and only 14% on well formed grammatical sentences. It is also shown that children tend to repeat recast more often than other non-corrective reformulations (Demetras et al., 1986; Farrar, 1992; Furrow et al., 1993; Hirsh- Pasek et al., 1984). These findings support the idea that children receive information regarding the ungrammaticality of their sentences.

Despite the findings of the latter studies mentioned above, it is still difficult to draw the conclusion that the negative force of the error correction plays a key role in child language acquisition. Pinker (1989) made the point that to conclude that negative evidence has any role in child language acquisition it must be shown that such evidence has four features; it is (a) available to all children (b) usable (c) used and (d) necessary. Part of the problem of investigating the role of negative evidence is that it is difficult to study it in isolation of positive evidence. Recasts, the most common type of feedback, for example, provides not

only information about the unacceptability of the child's language production but also information about the correct exemplar, and therefore, contained both positive and negative evidence (Leeman, 2003). This has led some scholars to argue that the useful effect of providing children's error correction, if at all, is simply because of the further language input, i.e. the positive evidence, that such corrections present, (Morgan and Travis 1989, Morgan et al., 1995).

There are others who believe children, at least in some cases, are capable of observing the corrective force of adults' feedback (Demetras et al., 1986; Bohannon and Stanowicz, 1988; Saxton, 1997). Saxton, for instance, proposes his Direct Contrast Hypothesis based on the fact that under some condition children are capable of understanding the negative force of the correction:

> When a child produces an utterance containing erroneous form, which is responded immediately with an utterance containing the correct adult alternative to the erroneous form (i.e. when negative evidence is supplied), then the child may perceive the adult form being in CANTRAST to the equivalent child form. Cognizance of the relevant contrast can then form the basis for perceiving the adult form as the correct alternative to the child form. (Saxton 1997, p.155)

Elsewhere he concludes that 'young children [four year olds] can identify and exploit the corrective potential of negative evidence' (Saxten et al., 1998, 720). Nicolas et al. (2001, p. 12) in their review of the studies of the effect of recast in L1 concluded that the perception of the negative force of the corrective feedback recast, among other things, depends on the fact that recast is not being overused. Long (1996) in a review study concluded that the findings of the research studies in L1 allow us to conclude that caretakers usually provide children with implicit negative evidence, and such feedback is both usable and used by the child at least in short period of time.

2.3. CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN L2; HISTORICAL PRESPECTIVE

The practice of feedback on the errors of L2 learners has witnessed a drastic change as the perception over the role of errors in language learning has altered. In audio lingual method errors are mainly considered as the intervention of L1 habits and were to be corrected right away. Brook (1960:58) resembled errors to sins that "must be avoided and their influence must be overcome". A zero tolerance was encouraged as tremendous amount of pattern practice was employed to ensure the correct use of L2 with lowest likelihood of language errors. Contrastive analyses were supposed to reveal where the errors more likely to occur. These areas were later subjected to carefully constructed mechanical drills employed to prevent the intervention of so called old habits and ultimately yielding to what Bloomfield called 'over-learning' (1942).

The attitude towards errors; however, changed as the basic tenants of audio-lingual method went under severe criticism by Chomsky. He started to question the habit formation nature of language learning. Language learning, as he put, is different from other general learning activities. It is a process of abstract rules formation, a mental activity which cannot be subjected to direct observation. Errors are viewed as the natural product of a working mind that tries to work out the rules of language and test hypotheses to figure out how it works.

A similar argument of nativists in L1 was also translated into L2. It was argued that if the same language faculty found in L1 is still available in L2, and if L2 learners have access to UG in a similar manner as children do, then it is probable that the negative evidence, or the indication of inappropriate use of language, may have no effect in the future use of the language, and learning of a new language could be solely developed on the base of having positive evidence and enough exposure to the target language. Krashen, for instance, dismissed the idea of effectiveness of the corrective feedback on second language acquisition. He asserted that prolonged exposure to input is the only impelling drive to bring about language acquisition. For him, any conscious approach to learning forms, including corrective feedback, was of no value. Error correction could be considered even

harmful since it could impede natural flow of interaction that could provide comprehensible input (Krashen 1982 cited in Kim 2004).

The morpheme studies conducted in 1970s also lent support to Chomsky's view. Dualy and Burt (1973, 1974 & 1975) studies on learning of second language morpheme revealed that, like L1 language learners, L2 learners go through systematic stages as they learn a target language. In their study of children with different native languages learning English as a second language they found a highly fixed levels of acquisition for 13 morphemes. They concluded that it is most likely that "children of different language background learning English in a variety of host country environments acquire eleven grammatical morphemes in a similar order" Dualy et al. (1982). Another interesting point about this order was that, though not identical, it showed similarity with that of L1 (Spada, Lightbown, 2002). These findings supported the assumption that errors are inevitable reflection of transient stages that learners go through. They reveal information regarding the language of learners or what is later came to be labeled as interlanguage. This information could help the instructors to decide what learners have learned so far and what they need to know to move to the next stage (Corder, 1974). The immediate correction of deviant structure abounded in traditional pedagogy hence gave way to more tolerant responses in latter era. At times, this encouraged a selective and systematic approach to error correction (Corder, 1975).

The advent of communicative and content based approach also added new impetus to the assumption that errors should be treated more judiciously. As fluency acquired more prominence over accuracy in communicative language teaching (Brown, 2004), error correction became subservient to communication objectives so that the flow of interaction between interlocutors is sustained. Error correction, though sometimes necessary, should be reserved for the most deviant errors and perfection should be avoided (Larsen Freeman, 2000).

There were, of course, others who went so far as to argue for even the avoidance of error correction. Nativists, such as Krashen (1984), for instance, maintained that error correction has no role in language acquisition, and it only results in conscious learning which could not be used in spontaneous language production. He argued that error correction makes learners to take a defensive position and discourages them from using difficult structures. He added that 'even under the best conditions, with the most learning-oriented students, teacher corrections will produce results that will not live up to the expectation of many instructors' (1982:119). Truscott (1999) likewise argued that the correction of learners' errors has only temporary effect and warned against the risk of negative affective consequences of correcting students' errors. In his criticism of the use of oral grammar correction he states that;

> . . .research evidence points to the conclusion that oral correction does not improve learners' ability to speak grammatically. No good reasons have been advanced for maintaining the practice. For these reasons, language teachers should seriously consider the option of abandoning oral grammar correction altogether. (p. 437)

All the same, studies on error correction remained at the heart of second language studies. Different reasons may contribute to such ongoing interest on corrective feedback of the teachers. One main reason could be the prevalent discontent with purely meaning focused approaches as they fell short of developing learners' accuracy particularly with regard to morphology and syntax. (Lightbown, Halter, White, and Horst, 2002; Lightbown and Spada, 1990, 1994). The result of immersion programs in Canada, for example, with their high emphasis on meaning and communication failed to produce the desired amount of accuracy on learners (Lightbown and Spada, 1990). Learners, who developed a considerable level of proficiency in receptive skills, listening and reading, failed to reveal the similar level of proficiency in productive skills due to their inaccurate use of grammar. A need is felt to reconsider the importance of language form so that a healthier balance is struck between fluency and accuracy.

The more recent trends in language learning started to experience what could be rightly called a revitalization of attention to form again. The shift brought with itself the necessity

of deploying the pedagogical means that make such form focused instruction possible. Corrective feedback is yet one of such pedagogical means. Long (1998) focus on form approach, for instance, suggested a rationale for (implicit) treatment of language grammar which is employed when the learners experience some difficulty with communicating the intended meaning. Such attention to form was incidental and justified only by communicative needs of the speakers. Corrective feedback was considered as one of the ideal teachers' strategic move by which a swift shift could be made to the form without sacrificing the centrality of meaning.

Several other theories and hypothesizes also highlighted the importance of focus on language form, and thereby cast light on the pivotal role of CF in language learning (Long interaction hypothesis, 1996; Swain out hypothesis, 1985, 1995; Schmit's noticing Hypothesis, 1990 and Long's Focus on Form hypothesis, 1998). Long's interactional hypothesis (1983,1996), for example, viewed learners' errors as potential means for expanding the language of learners. It is through the correction of the learners' error or what Long called *negotiation of meaning* that language of the learners is stretched beyond its present limits. Schmit (1990), noticing hypothesis, likewise underscored the importance of conscious attention to form. He asserted that not all input is taken in and incorporated into learners' repertoire. To ascertain the effectiveness of available input, it must be first brought into the learners' attention and only that part of input that is noticed could be converted into intake. The corrective feedback was one of the attention getting devices that could direct the awareness of learners on the language elements that might otherwise left unnoticed. Unless such awareness towards the existence of language item is raised, it cannot not be subjected for further mental processes and learning. Since these theories in a direct or indirect manner underlined the importance of corrective feedback and contribute to its practice in language classes, they will be discussed in turn below.

2.4. INTERACTIONAL HYPOTHESIS

Interactional hypothesis could be best considered as an extension of Krashen input hypothesis (Mitchell & Myles, 1998). According to Krashen (1985) comprehensible input is not only necessary but also enough to bring about the acquisition of a target language. Long moved Krashen hypothesis one step forward and claimed that conversation interaction is the very means that facilitates comprehension of input. He took an indirect route to rationalize how this could occur in three steps:

> Step 1. Show that (a) linguistic/conversational adjustments promote comprehensible input.
> Step 2. Show that (b) comprehensible input promotes (c) acquisition.
> Step 3. Show linguistic/conversational adjustments promote (c) acquisition.

In his study of comparing the interactions between native speakers, and native and nonnative speakers Long (1980) showed that the latter group displayed a different type of language discourse. They employ a great amount of conversational modification such as comprehension check (Did you understand?), repetition and confirmation check (Is this what you mean?) or-choice in which the NS speaker ask a question and then right away provides some choices for the NNS to choose from (How did you come here? by bus or by car?), clarification request (what did you say?)

It is the use of these conversational devices that makes the comprehension of the semantic context of conversations easier for the learners (Mackey, Gass and McDonough, 2000). Such conversational move is not just a medium to practice specific language item but a means that form the basis for language development. Conversation, in this sense, gains another layer of methodological value (Gass, 2003). Long (1996) encapsulated these ideas in his Interactional Hypothesis:

> …negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments by the NS or more competent interlocutors, facilitates acquisition because it connects input,

> internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive way. (pp. 451-452).

The act of negotiation also elicits negative feedback through which the input and output are matched and erroneous productions of language producers are corrected. The language learners' attention is drawn to language forms that they have failed to notice in purely comprehension based environments. Long further underlined the area that the effect of such corrective feedback drawn via negotiation of meaning is expected to work most:

> Negative feedback obtained during negotiation work or elsewhere may be facilitative of L2 development, at least for vocabulary, morphology and language-specific syntax, and essential for learning certain specific L1-L2 contrast (1996, p. 444).

Gass (2003) speculates the possible results of negotiation of meaning in a more or less similar way. She predicts two positive outcome of the negotiated interaction between nonnative speaker and native or more proficient speaker. The first one is that learners will come to realize the difference between what they know, their imperfection knowledge of target language, and what actually the target language consists of. Another result is that learners may also come to realize the area of language that they have no information about. In this sense, interaction acts as a priming device (Gass, 1997) that direct learners' focal attention towards a completely new language item, the first exemplars in the information gathering process. Several other exemplars might be needed to act as a reinforcing device to help learners confirm or disconfirm the initial information received about the specific parts of language. The follow up input coupled with thinking and processing help the learners to move to the higher level of their language learning process (Leeman, 2003).

The question, however, remains as to how effective the conversation is, compared to the other available resources, to bring about a change in learners' language repertoire. Gass (2003, pp. 241-44) ascribed three different roles, with varying amount of importance, to conversation as a basis for language learning; the positive evidence, the negative evidence, and a device for language production. As for the provision of positive evidence through conversational interaction, she argues for a limited role of the conversation as an input

resource, compared to other sources such as books, listening to lecture or TV, for language learning. The latter ones provide more rich language data to the learners, quantitatively speaking. A more effective role might be given to the negative evidence of the conversation where the learners receive feedback over the incorrect and ungrammaticality of their language. This is where the learners come to notice the incompatibility of their language with that of target language. The area where the conversation reveals its most impact is; however, production where the language learners try to test their hypothesis and where automaticity over the already learned language items are exercised.

Several studies empirically investigated the role that conversation interaction plays in L2 development (Loschky, 1994; Gass and Varonis,1994). Loschky (1994) conducted research to measure the effect of speech modification, and interaction of locative sentences to the learners of Japanese as foreign language learners. Three groups are used in the study. The first group only listened to the original sentences with no further support. The second group listened to the modified form of these sentences, where more redundancy was added to the original sentences. The third group was allowed to interact and ask for further information on the presented sentences. The findings showed that the last group, the group which was allowed for interaction, was more successful in completing the listening comprehension task. While this could be considered as a kind of support for Long's interaction hypothesis, the comparison of the pre and post-test results of language proficiency, i.e. the subjects knowledge on locative sentences, revealed no significant difference between three groups. In other word, while the interaction resulted in better comprehension, it revealed no significant impact on retention. This is an evidence for the credibility of step 1 of Long's theory mentioned above, i.e. that interaction results in a better comprehension, but failed to reveal credibility for step 2, that comprehension increases acquisition.

Gass and Varonis (1994) conducted a study to figure out the effect of using modified input and interaction on comprehension and production of L2 learners as well as comprehension of NS. They paired native and nonnative speakers to conduct a type of task that required them to place objects on the board. Both native and nonnative speakers took turn to give

instruction as the other member completed the task. When the native speakers gave the instruction they used either modified (reading from a script) and none modified input reading. Half of the instructors were also allowed to interact with their pairs during the task while the other half did not. When the NNS gave the instruction they used no script i.e. no modified input is used by nonnative speakers. The results showed that once the native speakers gave the instruction, the use of both modified text and interaction resulted in a better comprehension of the nonnative speakers. However, once the role was reversed and non-native speaker took the responsibility of giving the instruction, the interaction between native and nonnative speakers did not yield in a better comprehension of native speakers. An interesting finding of the study was that those groups of NNS who were allowed to interact with their NS pairs through first trial of the study improved their production skill and gave a better instruction to their native speaker pairs during the second part of the research. Over all, the data supported the claim that interaction can improve the comprehension. It also revealed a positive effect on L2 learners' production.

Similar result was reported in Polio and Gass (1998) study in which the NNS gave instruction to NS to complete a task in which different objects were placed on a board. Again half of dyed groups were allowed to interact while performing the task and the other were not. The NS comprehension of the NNS instructions was measured based on how accurately they could locate the objects on the board. The findings showed a positive connection between the negotiation and improvement of the production of NNS.

The positive impact of conversational interactions, however, is not limited to production skill and comprehension of L2 learners. There are a few studies that showed the conversational interaction may result in the acquisition of new L2 forms. Ellis, Tanaka, Yamazaki (1994), for example, investigated the effect of conversation interaction on learning of new vocabulary and word order. They found that the negotiation of meaning increased the comprehension speed as well as the number of new words learned in the study. Mackey (1999) looked at the result of interaction on question formation of L2 learners of different language proficiency. Five groups of participants were selected for the

study: interaction groups which further divided into a more proficient group and less proficient group with regard to language items in question. The third group received just modified input, the fourth group just observed the interaction without involving in it and a control group. The statistical results showed that interaction groups displayed greater improvement than the other groups. The result of delayed post tests showed that the acquired improvement also persisted over time.

Gass and Torres (2005) carried out a study in which they examined the effect of input and interaction as separated and combined independent variables on the different language areas. Four different experimental groups were exposed to different types of treatment:(a) interaction only (b) input only (c) input followed by interaction (d) interaction followed by input. Learners exposed to input and interaction both revealed better improvement than those who received only input or interaction. Once looked at the learning in all language areas under investigation, the greatest improvement was detected in vocabulary learning. Some aspects of grammar are best learned in the group in which the interaction was followed by input. They concluded that the complexity and abstractness of the language form may affect the result of different ways of language presentation and learning.

In another study Mackey, Gass & McDonough (2000) looked at the result of interaction from learners' perspectives. They opted to figure out how learners perceive different feedback types and whether or not they could assign them the value that they were originally intended. That is, whether they could perceive the target of the feedback as it is aimed by its provider. To find out about this, some Italian NNS were asked to conduct a joined communicative task with NS and work out the differences in some pictures. The interviewers supplied different types of corrective feedback to the learners' error on lexis, morphosyntax, phonology, or semantic as they arose during the negotiation and recast. These interactions were video recorded and then shown to the learners. The result of subsequent stimulated recall comments of learners on their videos showed that they were relatively accurate in perceiving the lexical, semantic and phonological feedback. They, nonetheless, failed to assign the right value to morphosyntacic feedback. To explain the

reason, the researchers speculated that learners' failure in perceiving the morphosyntactic feedback could be due to the lesser role that morphosyntax plays in the understanding of message.

Overall the results of these studies prove a positive effect for interaction. This is more so with regard to comprehension and production skills of language learners. Cautions; however, should be exercised when conclusions are drawn regarding the acquisition of language items. Different language areas might respond in different manners to the interaction moves. Among these areas, it seems that morphosyntactic is comparatively more resistant to undergo language change. Gass (2003) likewise contends that low level phenomena such as pronunciation or basic meaning of language items might be more affected by negative evidence.

2.5. ATTENTION AND NOTICING HYPOTHESIS

According to Krashen (1985) language input is both necessary and enough to bring about language acquisition in learners. This idea is criticized on several grounds. For one thing, it is not clear that input by itself could be adequate to bring about the ideal change in language learners. As it will be discussed later, some degree of language output is also necessary for Language learning. For another, it seems that Krashen has failed to explain how this input might eventually be taken in and added to learners' language competence. He holds that it is only the quality of the input that counts in the end; provide i+ 1 and lower the affective filter and then learning will come along on its own. There is not much explanation, though, as to how the internalization process of the data occurs and how learners, among so many stimuli, opt for the specific language items and submit them for the mental operation. Schmit noticing hypothesis is the promising missing ring to disentangle the mystery. It accounts for the condition under which comprehensible input, to use Krashen's term, becomes part of linguistic competence of language learners.

Schmit (1990, 1994) drawing upon his personal experience of learning of Portuguese language made the point that only those language elements that are noticed could be submitted for the further analysis. He claimed that 'intake is that part of input that the learner notices' (1990, p.139). A degree of attention to language form is hence necessary if a new language is supposed to be acquired. He wrote 'SLA is largely driven by what learners pay attention to and notice in target language input' (2001, pp. 3-4). He further enumerated different kinds of attention and distinguished between 'noticing' and 'understanding or awareness'. The former, noticing, is defined as the process of bringing some stimulus into focal attention. This stimulus is registered in ones memory either voluntarily or involuntarily (Mitchel & Myles, 1998). The latter, awareness and understanding, is reserved for the explicit knowledge about language rules, i.e. metalinguistic awareness (Schmit 1994, 2001). Schmit further argued that higher levels of awareness, the knowledge about the rules, are not necessary but facilitating for language learning.

Though at some levels Schmit's hypothesis seems to offer justification to that of Krashen _by explaining the conditions under which input can be converted into intake_ the two views seem to be at odds with regard to the role of consciousness in language learning. While Krashen believes that the linguistic competence could only be developed unconsciously, in an implicit manner, Schmit assumes that subliminal language learning is impossible and some degree of attention is necessary to alter the competence of language learners. Indeed in the earlier version of his hypothesis, Schmit argued that no learning will happen without attention (Schmit 1990, 1993 a, 1993b, 1994), but he modified his stand in his subsequent papers and argued that some language learning may occur even without awareness though he did not assumed it to be of a considerable value compared to the bigger picture of language learning in general (Schmit, 1998, 2001).

What seems to at the center of noticing hypothesis is a process known as *noticing of gap* (Schmit & Frota, 1986). It is through this process that the learners' compares and come to notice the difference between what they can produce and what they hear in the input.

Through noticing of gap learners are prompted to restructure their interlanguage system and bring it closer to the norms of target language. The role of corrective feedback in this regard is facilitative. Feedback could play the role of stimuli that trigger the learners' attention towards the language item. It drives learners' attention to notice the discrepancy between their own transient imperfect language and the target language they attempt to learn. In other word, the corrective feedback is the one of the devices, among others, that makes learners to notice the gap.

The noticing hypothesis has, of course, been criticized on several grounds (Tomlin and Villa, 1994; Truscott, 1998). For one thing, it seems highly improbable that language learning is limited to what is consciously noticed. Swan (2005) set the example that some nonnative speakers were able to accurately pronounce the different allophones of /P/, for instance in spin and pin, without actually noticing the existence or lack of existence of aspiration in them. Tomlin and Villa (1994), likewise, argued that the detection of information, which does not require any conscious awareness, is adequate to bring about learning and the type of selection accompanied by attention has no crucial role to play in learning process[1]. Trustcott (1998) even goes so far to claim that competence is not affected by noticing. More empirical studies are required to prove or disprove the credibility of such claims about the role of noticing

2.6. OUTPUT HYPOTHESIS

The idea that language production, alongside language input, is necessary for stretching the interlanguage of learners was proposed by Swain (1985, 1995) and Swain and Lapkin (1995, 1998) in Output hypothesis. The theory was inspired by the results of studies carried out in immersion programs in Canada (Lightbown and Spada 1990; Lightbown and Spada 1993 intensive ESL program; Harley, 1989; Day and Shapson, 1991; Lyster 1994, French immersion program) where it was found that learners despite years of exposure to language

1. Robinson (1995, 2003) takes issue with Tomlin and Villa arguing that noticing at the level of detection may not be enough for registering of stimulus in short term and consequently in long term memory.

input, failed to achieve native like mastery, at least with regard to grammatical accuracy. Swain argued that the reason for this is not the lack of comprehensible input as learners had plenty of it, but the fact that learners were not given enough chance to use the language, to be *pushed* to produce the language.

Language production could benefit language learners in several ways. One obvious impact of language output is on fluency. Speaking, could improve the fluency of language users by processes that automatize the use of learned knowledge. The "constant mapping of same input to the same pattern of activation over many trials" (Mclaughlin, 1987 p.134) could help learners become more fluent user of the knowledge that they have already taken in. However, the role of speaking is not simply limited to practicing the routine use of language. Output could also play an equally important role on expanding the accuracy of the L2 learners.

To account for the way this may happen Swain (1995) made the point that the processes involved in comprehension and production are not identical. In comprehension, the pragmatic likelihood may alleviate the necessity to attend to syntactic parsing. But this is not possible in language production where language elements are threaded and put side be side to produce the intended message. While in listening it is possible to comprehend a message without fully analyzing its syntactic structure, language production requires the type of processing that needs more active attention to structure of language. As Swain state "output may stimulate learners to move from the semantic, open-ended, nondeterministic, strategic, processing prevalent in comprehension to the complete grammatical processing needed for accurate production." Swain (1995) calls this type of language production as pushed output and holds that it helps learners to improve their accuracy in three different ways:

1. Output could prompt *noticing the gap* between what learners want to produce and what they can produce. Learners only recognize the inadequacy of their language and the need to expand it once they face a difficulty with producing the language.

The output in this sense has a consciousness raising role. It encourages learners to realize and solve their linguistic limitations.

2. Output could help hypothesis testing. The erroneous production of language learners usually reveals that learner is testing hypothesis about the target language. One way that such hypothesis testing process could be actualized is through language production.
3. Output can act as a meta-linguistic tool whereby it is used to negotiate and reflect upon form and language itself which eventually may help learners control and internalize linguistic knowledge.

Pica and her colleagues (1989) study afforded support to Swain's ideas. They found that over one third of learners changed their utterances in response to clarification and confirmation request. They argued that with modifying their output learners indeed "test hypothesis about the second language, experiment with new structure and forms and expand and exploit their inter-language resources in a creative ways". Swain (1995) considered such modified out put as "the leading edge of a learners' inter-language". She also made the point that the fact that in Pica' s study only one third (not all) of the original utterances were changed supports the idea that their output would be *selector* of what will be attended to, another proof about hypothesis testing nature of output.

Ellis (1990), however, cautioned us that the results of such studies should be treated with care since they do not reveal that the real acquisition has taken place. He added that the true contribution of pushed output could be to "make learners use those variants in their current inter-language that are closer to native one" (p. 129). He doubts that output hypothesis by itself offers much explanation as to how production leads to acquisition. He holds that the fact that learners realize their limited language knowledge through production only underscores Schmit's noticing hypothesis and thus underlines the importance of input not output in acquisition process In other words, for Ellis the main role of output in acquisition is only indirect and it makes its effect through motivating learners to be more attentive to language input (Ellis, 2003).

2.7. FOCUS ON FORM

Form focused instruction, as proposed by Long (1988) and Long and Robinson (1998) was the result of dissatisfaction with the outcome of two types of approaches to language teaching. The first one was the traditional discrete point language teaching based on linguistic syllabi where language was broken into its elements and taught in a linear fashion. Long referred to such incremental and linguistically isolated approach to teaching of language forms as Focus on FormS, and argued that it was outmoded and proved ineffective (Fotos, 1998).

The second approach which grew out of discontent with the first one was purely communicative one. The idea was that language teaching should primarily be meaning focused and language forms are best learned as a by-product of communication when the focus of learners is exclusively on meaning. Learners are assumed to discover the language system by themselves as they come to use language to communicate their intended ideas (Ellis, 2003). Such non-interventionist approach also fell short of bringing the desired outcome. Learners despite having considerable exposure to target language and prolonged experience of communication failed to developed their linguistic competence beyond certain levels (Lightbown, Halter, White and Horst, 2002; Lightbown and Spada, 1990, 1994).

In his quest for striking a healthy balance between form and meaning, Long (1988, 1991) proposed a third and alterative approach to meet the need of language learners for accuracy without reverting to the traditional discrete point language teaching. He named the new approach as Focus on Form (FonF), as apposed to the traditional formS-focused instruction, and defined it

> …, focus on form often consists of an occasional shift of attention to linguistic code features – by the teacher and/or by one or more students- triggered by the perceived problems in communication (Long and Robinson, 1998, p.23).

The final intended result of focus on form is to make learners *notice* (Long and Robinson p. 24) language form in a meaning oriented communicative context. The intention here is to keep the centrality of meaning by conducting communicatively oriented tasks and activities while shifting learners' attention, from time to time, to language form as the necessity for such change arises. Focus on form is, therefore, provided when learners experience difficulties with communicating their intended message and not in predetermined manner. Once such need is observed, the instructors could use different reactive techniques, such as oral recast, to bring language form into the learners' attention and provide required instruction. Long (1991) also argues that the correction introduced in this manner is implicit since the attention of language learners are shifted to form with minimal interruption in communicative activities.

An important point about focus on form is that it was originally intended to be incidental rather than predetermined. Long made the point that FoF 'overtly draws students' attention on to linguistic elements as they arise *incidentally* in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication' (Long 1991, pp. 45-46). Future studies, however, expanded the definition to include preplanned attention to form alongside the incidental ones (Loewn, 2005). Ellis (2001) consequently differentiates between two types of FoF; planned and incidental FoF. The planned focus on form intends to target specific language item either in the form of input (e.g. input flood where specific language item repeatedly appear in the input raising the chance of noticing by learners, or input enhancement techniques where learners' attention is drawn to language form by highlighting and underlining targeted items) or output (e.g. the provision of corrective feedback on the predetermined targeted language item). In the incidental FoF, on the other hand, the targeted linguistic items arise spontaneously in purely meaning focused lessons.

Both types of FoF have their own advantages. While planned focus on form could provide an intensive coverage of specific language item, incidental focus of form provide extensive coverage targeting a large range of various language item (Ellis et al., 2001). The different

types of corrective feedback, as presented in our study, fall into category of planned FoF instruction.

2.7. IIMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT KNOWLEDGE

The idea that second language learners could have access to two types of knowledge goes back to Krashen monitor model hypothesis (1981) where he compared learning and acquisition. Learning, he stated, is the result of formal instruction where learners come to grasp language forms consciously as the instructors bring them to their focal attention. Acquisition, on the other hand, happens unconsciously as learners pick up a language while their focus is primary on the meaning and when they are involved in purposeful communicative interaction. Later, however, Krashen (1982) expanded his terminology and used explicit and implicit learning to refer to learning and acquisition respectively.

Hulstijn (2005) drawing on Anderson & Lebiere (1998), Bialystok (1982), R., Ellis (2004) holds that the difference between explicit and implicit knowledge is based, respectively, on the existence or lack of " awareness of regularities underlying the information one has knowledge of" and ability or disability to " verbalize these regularities". In other words, knowledge is explicit when individuals are aware of its existence and capable of explicitly declaring and verbalizing it. It is implicit when individuals are capable of using that knowledge but incapable of expressing it in words. He further states that explicit and implicit knowledge are often related to effortful and automatic processing respectively.

Ellis (2004, 2005, 2006) expanded the dichotomy by offering seven dimensions through which the representation and processing of two types of knowledge are differentiated. At representation level the two kinds of knowledge varies in term of awareness, type, systemticity and certainty of L2 knowledge.

Awareness: awareness could be divided into conscious and unconscious awareness. An example of the latter is the cases when one instantly realizes that a sentence is ungrammatical. The conscious awareness is to do with meta-linguistic ability to explain

why a sentence is ungrammatical. While the implicit knowledge is unconscious type, the explicit knowledge is conscious awareness.

Type of knowledge: in terms of type explicit knowledge is declarative and factual while the implicit knowledge is highly automated and proceduralized.

Certainty and sytematicity: While the explicit knowledge is highly uncertain and imprecise, the implicit knowledge is highly systematic and structured.

At processing level the two types of knowledge differ in terms of accessibility, use, self report and learnability.

Accessibility of knowledge: while explicit knowledge is controlled processing, the implicit is automatic processing.[2]

The use of knowledge: the use of each knowledge types varies according to the task condition in which they are used. In other words, task condition imposes limitation on the use of each knowledge type. For example, learners are more likely to use their implicit knowledge once they are required to produce language under time pressure and when focus is primarily on the meaning.

Self-report: explicit knowledge is generally verbalizable in that people could explain the reason why they use specific rule, for instance, though they may do so using nontechnical words.

Learnability: more contentiously explicit knowledge could be learned at any age, whereas implicit knowledge is usually age related. There are certain language areas that are difficult to acquire once language learners has passed a sensitive period. Likewise, people who start their language learning at early ages are more likely to develop a high level of implicit knowledge while those who start after adolescent, especially when they learn the target

[2]. The access to explicit knowledge could, of course, be speeded up. There is no consensus; however, if such automated explicit knowledge is functionally equivalent to that of implicit knowledge. Dekeyser (2003) believes that once explicit knowledge is being automantized, it becomes no functionally different from implicit knowledge. Hulstijn (2002), on the other hand, argues that practice will only "speed up the execution of algorithmic rules to some extent" (p. 211) and hence the automated explicit knowledge and implicit knowledge are accessed in different manners. These will be further discussed in the interface theories in the proceeding pages.

language through instruction are more likely to develop their explicit knowledge (Ellis, 2005, 2006).

What seems to be interesting is that both in UG based approach to language learning and frequency based approach of Connectionist models, it is the implicit knowledge that is considered as the source of language competence (R. Ellis 2005). While in the former learning is the result of innate endowments implanted in our genes to direct, regulate and reduced language leaning to setting some parameters with regard to language input one is exposed to, the latter views language learning not much unlike other learning processes when learners' job is to draw pattern of regularities based on the frequencies with which they receive language data over time (N. Ellis, 2005). Though these two theories are at odds on many respects, they seem to share the common point that language competence, for the most part, is the knowledge type which is stored implicitly rather than explicitly (Erham 2006, R. Ellis 2005).

While the existence of the two knowledge types is commonly accepted in SLA, there is not much agreement whether explicit knowledge has any role over developing implicit knowledge of learners and if the two knowledge types interact in any way. The different views regarding the relationship between explicit and implicit knowledge has yielded three different 'interface' theories in the literature.

The first position known as non-interface theory argues that there is neither any connection nor the possibility of conversion of one knowledge type into another (Krashen, 1981; Hulstijn, 2002). The two types of knowledge are stored in different parts of the brain (Pardis, 1994) and are completely detached from each other. Implicit knowledge develops through implicit learning when the focus of activity is primarily on meaning and explicit instruction can not lead into development of the linguistic competence of the learners[3]. The

[3]. Closely tied with the explicit and implicit knowledge is explicit and implicit learning. The former functions when the subjects make a conscious effort to draw regularities and patterns out the input (Hulstijn, 2005) while the later operates with no intention of drawing such rules and is largely independent of awareness (Reber et al., 1999).

facilitating role of explicit knowledge in language production is thus restricted to the cases when language learners have ample time, before language production, to mull over and pick up the right form, or after production when this knowledge is used to monitor the grammaticality of language output just produced (Krashen, 1982). Explicit knowledge could not, however, help learners with the spontaneous language production. Nor is there any likelihood that such knowledge could be transferred into implicit one no matter of type and amount of practice. In later weaker version of non-interface theories there is, however, a possibility that *implicit* knowledge is turned into *explicit* one if what is produced through implicit knowledge is consciously reflected upon and analyzed (Bialystok, 1994).

The crucial question here is how could language learning, or acquisition to use Krashen terminology, happen implicitly without conscious awareness of language learners? A partial explanation might be found in the N. Ellis (2005) account of implicit vocabulary learning where he makes the points that some vocabulary could be learned implicitly when learners fail to notice the existence of new words yet manage, at least to some extent, to process them[4].

> There is implicit associative learning that results from stimuli that are attended and automatically processed following pre-established task-relevant routines, even though this level of attention might not be sufficient for awareness, for seeing the stimulus.

Likewise, Tomlin and Villa (1994) referred to the activation of information in memory as *detection* and argued that the activation of the memory representation could occur without the awareness of the individuals. They carried their argument forward and claimed that the activation of these representations, with no direct focal attention of the individual, is adequate for learning. [5]

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4. As stated in proceeding paragraphs, Nick Ellis could be best grouped as the advocate of a second camp, i.e. the weak interface position. The rationale for quoting N. Ellis here is to account for the possible ways where implicit language learning could occur independent of conscious awareness.

[5] The degree to which implicit language learning could contribute to overall general language learning is far from settled. Dekeyser (2003), for instance, plays down such contributions arguing that neither cognitive psychologists, nor SLA researchers have managed to reveal that people could learn abstract rules without

The second position known as weak interface position (R. Ellis 1994, 2003; N. Ellis 2005) still holds that two knowledge types are distinct, dissociated and cannot be converted into each other, yet it is believed that explicit knowledge could help speed up language acquisition (N. Ellis 2005, p. 307). Ellis (2003, p.149) asserts that this is possible in two different ways. First explicit knowledge aids process of *noticing*. Learners who have the explicit knowledge about a language item are more likely to notice it in the input while they are involved in communicative interaction and hence learn it implicitly. It is also explicit knowledge that could help learners *notice the gap* between their insufficient language and that of more proficient language users. Explicit knowledge in this sense helps learners to carry out a cognitive comparison between their language repertoire and what they receive through language feedback. What they could say and what should be told instead. Whatever the case, the contention is that explicit knowledge has facilitating role for the final implicit learning and not that it could eventually render into the other knowledge type.

In a similar vain N. Ellis (1994, 2005) argues that two knowledge types are of different staff and stored in different parts of brain and the effect of explicit knowledge on implicit knowledge is mainly indirect through making salient some relevant features hence making learners notice them. "Declarative rules can also have top down influence on perception" (1994: 17) he states. Elsewhere he maintains:

> ….. metalinguistic description and other explicit knowledge that come to the consciousness at the appropriate moment to influence processing of language form and its corresponding interpretation do impact language knowledge (2005; 331).

In a simplified form N.C. Ellis (2005) offered the following sequence for learning in which explicit knowledge has a facilitating role on the final implicit knowledge development:

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being aware of them. He questions the methodology of research studies whose finding were in favor of implicit learning: "… any learning that take place in the 'implicit condition' is often due to the failure of learners to stick to the instruction of implicit learning; thus their (partial) learning is the result of (partial) awareness "(p. 336).

external scaffolded attention → internally motivated attention → explicit learning → explicit memory → implicit learning → implicit memory → automatization, and abstraction.

The model drawn above is highly suggestive that the explicit error correction, like the ones used in our study, could help learners to develop their linguistic competence which is implicit. The provided explicit feedback would set ideal contexts for language learners to blend their conscious and unconscious processing, and upon repeated traversing through the formula sketched out by N. Ellis, the explicit error correction could eventually result in the improvement of implicit memory and knowledge of L2 learners (see Ellis et al., 2006 p.343 for a similar argument).

The third theory known as strong interface was originally proposed by Sharwood Smith (1981) and later developed by Dekeyster (1998). It claims that explicit knowledge could indeed be transformed into implicit one through the right kind of practice. Strong interface theories draw on skill building theories in cognitive psychology such as McLaughlin information processing model (McLaughlin, 1987; McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996) and Anderson's ACT (adaptive Control of Thought model, 1983). One of the key concepts in skill building theories is a process known as automatization which is originally taken from the work of psychologist like Shiffrin and Schneider (1977). McLaughlin and Heredia (1996: 214) put the process as follows:

> ….. automatic processing involves the activation of certain nodes in memory each time the appropriate inputs are present. This activation is a learned response that has been built up through consistent mapping of the same input to the same pattern of activation over many trials.

Automatization helps language learners use their mental resources to attend higher level processing and express their intended meaning rather than being bogged down by lower level process related to the forms of language. The mental resources released as the result of automatization could be directed towards message content and help learners express themselves in a better way. The movement from controlled to automatic processing would also entail the constant *restructuring* of learners' linguistic repertoire as they repeatedly

reorganize their knowledge of the language. Language learners, for instance, come to realize that chunks and unified building blocks of language that they have learned could indeed be dissected into their making components. Language acquisition hence becomes the result of the joint product of integration and differentiation together leading to the restructuring of knowledge (N. Ellis 2005, p. 332).

A similar process to autmatization could also be detected in Anderson's ACT theory where learning is involved in moving from what is labeled as declarative knowledge, a knowledge of what, to procedural knowledge, a knowledge of how. Declarative knowledge is factual knowledge (Dekeyser, 1998). It is, for example, knowledge that an 's' should be added to the end of countable nouns to make them plural or 'ed' could be added to the end of regular verbs to refer to past. Procedural knowledge is the declarative knowledge that is fully automatized (Ellis 2003). In the case of plural 's', for example, we don't usually stop to think about how to use it, we simply add it without being much aware of so doing. The contention is that declarative knowledge could eventually turn into procedural knowledge and may gradually get lost[6]. The crucial question here is how one moves from exclusively declarative knowledge to the procedural or partially procedural knowledge. Anderson (1985, p. 232 cited in Towell and Hawkins 1994) suggest that the process of change from declarative to procedural knowledge pass through three stages

1. The cognitive stage: A description of the procedure is learned.
2. The associative stage. A method of performing the skill is carried out.
3. The autonomous stage. The skill becomes more and more rapid and automatic.

In the cognitive stage, for example, it is learned that a noun could be made plural when '-s' is added to the end of countable nouns. In associative stage learners learn to create a connection between an action or serious of actions and declarative knowledge e.g. how to

[6] There might be cases where procedural knowledge could be acquired without declarative representation though this is not so often in the bigger picture of the acquisition of procedural knowledge (Anderson and Fincham 1994; 1323).

actually add '-s' to the end of the noun in this case. In the third stage, they learned how to speed up their action and make it automatic, to the effect that, the declarative knowledge may even get lost (Mitchell and Myles, 1998, p. 88).

To Dekeyser (1998), it is only through communicative drills, where learners use language to express their intention that the process of proceduralization of declarative knowledge may start. This would entail explicit teaching of grammar to ensure maximum understanding of target language elements so that the knowledge is consolidated in the students' consciousness. This is later followed by communicative exercises whereby the declarative knowledge is gradually converted into procedural one. Ellis (2005), however, claims that there is not much agreement upon the nature and type of activities required for changing two different types of knowledge; i.e. whether it should be purely communicative or mechanical could also do the trick.

Some studies examined the relationship between the two types of knowledge (e.g. Hulstijn & Hulstijn, 1984; Seliger, 1979; Sorace, 1985; Green and Hecht, 1992; Macrory and Stone, 2000; Hu, 2002; DeKeyser, 1995; Ellis, Lowen & Erlam, 2006). In Green and Hecht study (1992), 300 German students who were learning English at the high school and university level were required to correct 12 grammatically incorrect sentences as well as offering explanation for their inaccuracy. The results showed that while learners could correct 78% of ungrammatical sentences, they only managed to state the rules of violation for 46% of cases. Green and Hecht argued that one explanation to account for the findings of the study was that the learners' implicit knowledge exceeded that of their explicit knowledge.

In a similar study, Macrory and Stone (2000) examined acquisition of French past perfect by English secondary school learners in UK. They employed three types of tests to measure a) perception of what learners knew about forming and using this tense (using self-reports of the students) b) their actual knowledge about the variety of the forms of this tense (using gap-filling tests) c) and their ability to use this structure in speaking and free writing. The findings revealed a mismatch between students' knowledge of the tense and

their ability to use it in free oral and written tests. While learners had fairly good perception and knowledge_ assessed through the first and second test_ of the tense in question, and were aware of the need for the use of auxiliary, they were less likely to use auxiliary in spontaneous language production. They argued that the lack of consistency between knowledge and use, or to use their terminology language-as-knowledge and language-for-use, may stem from existence of different sources from which they were derived_ classroom instruction for the former and routine practice for the latter.

Hu (2002) set out to examine the extent to which the availability of the explicit knowledge could help language learners with the spontaneous writing production, a task that mainly requires the use of implicit knowledge. He chose six language structures and employed verbalization and untimed error correction tasks to raise the consciousness of language learners towards the use of those structures. A comparison was made between the accuracy of language production in spontaneous writing task with and without completing awareness raising tasks. The results showed that the created awareness during the untimed error correction tasks and tasks that required learners to cite the rules helped learners with the accuracy of six language items under investigation suggesting that raising learners' consciousness towards specific language forms could help them become a better user of their metalinguistic knowledge.

The studies cited above attempted to show if there was any relation between implicit and explicit knowledge or if one knowledge type is available when testing condition requires the use of other knowledge types. None of the studies mentioned above; however, measure the interface theories in any direct way and the relationship between implicit and explicit knowledge has remained far from settled. Whether or not practice would convert one knowledge types into another (Dekeyser, 2003) or it simply speeds up the algorithm of rules (Hulstijn, 2002) and the two knowledge types remain intact is still a question to investigate. As Ellis (2005,146) puts, a study that opts to measure this needs to first develop the explicit knowledge of the learners by explicit teaching of a language items and

subsequently prepare the opportunity for practicing and hence developing the implicit knowledge.

What seems to be required as well and lacks in the previous studies is more fine-grained testing device. Ellis (ibid) underscored the need for revisiting the construct validity of tests of implicit and explicit knowledge arguing that in the most of the previous study what was measured for each knowledge type was not purely implicit and explicit. Once such test types are fashioned, we will be in a better position to examine the theories regarding the relationship between implicit and explicit knowledge.

Owing to the fact that EFL language learners exhibit a mismatch between their explicit and implicit knowledge in terms of the target language feature of the current study; that their explicit knowledge of the third person '-s' is usually more developed than their implicit knowledge, it is hoped that the finding of this study could reveal whether corrective feedback could help them develop their underdeveloped implicit knowledge of this structure as well. In a bigger picture this could also cast light on the possibility of existence of interface, strong or weak, between two knowledge types.

2.8. STRIKING A BALANCE BETWEEN FORM AND MEANING; A COGNITIVE APPROACH

This part addresses the difficulty that language learners face when they process language for both comprehension and production from a cognitive perspective. The aim is to find a kind of answer to the question why learners keep making the same errors on grammatical features, including the third person '-s' despite the considerable amount of instruction. One way to answer this question is to look at the role of attentional resources and the way they are used in real life language interactions both when the language is processed as an input data and when it is processed as an output production.

In his cognitive approach to language comprehension VanPatten (1996) argued that the limitation of attentional resources makes the selection between form and content necessary since it is difficult for L2 learners to focus both on meaning and form. When this occurs, the priority is usually set for the meaning, rather than form. Learners attempt to channel their limited mental processes to the message and treat language structures as secondary goal, a luxury that could be dealt with only after they have done with the content of the message. He asserts that "comprehension is seen as an effortful-phenomenon that consumes a great deal of attentional capacity. Driven to get meaning learners first allocate attentional capacity to detect content words in the input" (1996, p. 30,). He further argued that for learners to be able to process non-meaningful language form, like third person –'s', they need to fist be able to process the communicative content with little or no mental resources.

If this is true for comprehension of the message, then the length of the instruction that the learners receive, including the learners in our study, did not count much. It is unlikely, according to Van Pattern input processing theory, that language learners always notice and process third person singular '-s' every time it appeared in written texts or spoken data unless, of course, it was brought up to their attention by some instructional intervention. The long lasting history of education of learners then would not contribute much to the perception and processing of so called redundant language structure, such as third person '-s', in their language classes since it could be claimed that most of second language learners suffer from limited attentional resources.

Similar arguments could be made for the language output though the wide range of factors may make the issue more confounded. The conscious knowledge about the language form, the amount of attentional resources available, the degree these resources are channeled towards the accuracy, task type (whether communicative or not), the way a task is actualized in the real classroom, and the amount of planning time at hand are the factors, among the others, that decide whether language form is attended to, retrieved and produced with accuracy by language learners.

Tarone (1983) in her review of previous studies made the point that the accuracy of the oral language is related to amount of attention paid to speech. She showed that for different language form the amount of attention needed changes in a predicted manner. She suggested that for redundant forms, such as third person, the less attentional resources available, the lower the level of accuracy. Skehan (1998), likewise, drawing on the result of previous studies asserted that comparatively more mental resources are required for language production than for comprehension, and there is usually a fierce competition among fluency, accuracy and complexity for the limited resources to the effect that emphasizing one would always results at the cost of de-emphasizing the others. i.e. the focus on meaning depletes mental capacity leaving no resources to attend language form and vice versa.

Different tasks might likewise impose different amount of processing demand on the learners' mental resources as well as requiring them to channel the attention of language learners to form or meaning. Littlewood (2004), for example, in his attempt to redefine the concept of task offered a five dimensional paradigm in which language tasks were divided with regard to the amount of focus they required on form and meaning. He labeled five categories as non-communicative learning, pre-communicative language practice, communicative language practice, structured communication and authentic communication. The focus of attention of learners gradually shifts from form into meaning as one moves from the left of the continuum to the right. The first two tasks types require a considerable amount of focus on form while the last two are more meaning focused. What differentiates the communicative tasks at the end of continuum is the degree of predictability required for the use of the language. While structured communication is partially predictable, the authentic task is completely unpredictable.

Another important issue that might affect the accuracy with which learners use a language is the perception of learners of the intention for which a task is designed or used. As Littlewood (ibid) pointed out

> Even though a teacher may plan and conduct a communicative language practice task with the intention of simulating learners to work with a balanced focus on form and meaning … some learners may focus almost entirely on the form they are attempting to produce, whilst others may focus entirely on getting their meaning across. (Littlewood, 2004).

Thus, language learners who perceive a task as purely communicative may pay little attention to language form and hence make more grammatical errors, and those who realize that a task is following a form focused intention or a dual goal of addressing both form and meaning may attempt to reserved part of their mental resources to deal with language form and, therefore, make fewer grammatical mistakes.

The perception of learners of the intention behind of any task is not, of course, created in vacuum. The way a task is conducted and the type of feedback supplied to respond to language errors affects the way language learners manipulate their focal attention. What Littlewood seems to have overlooked is the role of instructor in implementation of task. The final perception of language learners of form focused or meaning focused nature of a task is a join product of task type as well as the methodological issue of the way a task is conducted in the classroom. A language task could be conducted in a way that increases the chance of directing learners' attention to meaning instead of language form or vice versa.

Coming to the corrective feedback, it is postulated that the context in which corrective feedback is conducted somehow affects its efficacy. Oliver and Mackey (2003), for instance, found that the recast would lead into more modified learners output in the explicit language context than in communicative context. In other words, in an explicit context learners are more likely to realize that the CF used is directed at language form rather than language message. If this is true for form focused contexts, it could be also assumed that in communicative contexts the perception of corrective feedback by learners is proportionally related to its explicit corrective force. In other words, the more communicative language tasks are, the more explicit the corrections are needed to be implemented so that they could be effective. This is an issue that needs further studies. There are, of course, other factors at

work that may affect the accuracy with which learners use language, such as the amount of planning time available or individual differences, but these fall way beyond our primary objectives here.

2.9. TYPES OF FEEDBACK IN L2

One way to look at the function of corrective feedback is to locate its role in the overall language data that learners are provided with. According to Long (1996), language learners could be exposed to two different types of data: positive evidence and negative evidence. The former provides learners with information of what is acceptable in L2, either in the form of authentic native like material or in the form of modified input that makes the comprehension easier. Negative evidence, on the hand, fulfills the opposite function and informs the learners of what is not acceptable or inappropriate. Negative evidence could be either preemptive, occur before the presentation, or corrective i.e. happen after the presentation to indicate that an erroneous language is just used by the learner (Long and Robinson, 1998). Lightbown & Spada, (1993) define corrective feedback as an indication to a learner that his or her use of target language is incorrect. For Chaudron (1977, p.31), it is "any reaction of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner utterance"

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Among the various classifications of feedback types the one proposed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) is probably the most often-cited. In their observational study of French immersion program, they attempted to trace the pattern of error treatment that occurred in the language classes. Based on the previous models and the results of analysis of teacher and student discourse recorded in their study, they drew a new analytical model to code error correction sequences. Six general categories of corrective feedback were hence identified: explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition of error. These will be further explained below:

In the explicit correction, the correct form of the erroneous form is provided. The teachers also openly indicate, as they provide the correct form, that the student statements are ill-formed:

S: and three pear. (sounds like beer)
S2: three beer.
T: not beer. Pear.
(from Sheen, 2004)

The next type of feedback is recast. It is defined as by Long (2006) as:

> a reformulation of all or part of a learner's immediately preceding utterance in which one or more non-target like (lexical, grammatical… etc) items are replaced by the corresponding target language form(s), and where, throughout the exchange, the focus of the interlocutors is on meaning not language as an object (p. 2).

A recast is mainly grouped as implicit feedback i.e. the correction is done in an unobtrusive manner:

S: Dangerous? (phonological error: /dange'rus/)
T: Yeah, good. Dangerous. (recast) You remember? Safe and dangerous. If you walk in the streets, you . . .
(from Panova and Lyster, 2002)

In clarification request an indication is made that the students' utterance is either misunderstood by the teacher or need repetition and reformulation (Spada and Frohlich 1995, p. 25). The clarification request usually takes the forms such as 'Pardon me', 'I'm sorry' or 'What do you mean by X' whereby the instructors express the need for the correction or further information.

T: Okay. This is the name of your city in Haiti where you grew up. Yes?
S: Yeah, my city . . .
T: Yeah, okay.
S : . . . where I live. (grammatical error)
T: Now? (clarification request)
S: Yeah . . . where I was living. (repair)
(from Panova and Lyster, 2002)

Instead of providing the correct form the teacher uses a hint that draws learners' attention to the erroneous form and thereby attempts to make the student do self correction.

Metalinguistic feedback is defined by Lyster and Ranta (1997), as "either comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the student utterance, without explicitly providing the correct answer" (p. 46).

S. He is going to work.
T. You need simple present.

What is also noticeable about this feedback type is that it is considered utterly explicit in that the ill-formed nature of the learners' production is overtly stated.

Elicitation is yet another feedback type. Lyster and Ranta (1997) identified three elicitation techniques by which learners are made to produce the correct form. In the first type the teacher strategically pauses and provides a blank for the students to complete. Below shows how this type of elicitation can be used to draw right lexical item.

S: New Ecosse. (L1)
T: New Ecosse. I like that. I'm sure they'd love that. Nova . . .?(elicitation)
S: Nova Scotia. (repair)
(from Panova and Lyster, 2002)

In the second type of elicitation technique teacher asks an open question which prompt the students to repair.

T: In a fast food restaurant, how much do you tip?
S: No money. (lexical error)
T: What's the word? (elicitation)
S: Five . . . four . . . (needs repair)
T: What's the word . . . in a fast food restaurant? (elicitation)
DifS: Nothing (repair)
T: Nothing, yeah. Okay, what tip should you leave for the following…(topic continuation)
(from Panova and Lyster, 2002)

In the third type of elicitation teachers ask students to reformulate their sentences.

S. Then he go to school.
T. Say it again please (elicitation)

Sheen (2004, pp.278-9) label these three elicitation techniques as elicit completion, elicit question and reformulation request respectively.

In repetition feedback teachers repeat the erroneous sentences with rising intonation highlighting where the students may have gone wrong.

T ….here, when you do a paragraph, you start here, well, let's see, anyway, you write... write, write, write (pretends to be writing on the board), remember this is . . . What is this called?
S: Comma. (lexical error).
T: Comma? (repetition)
DifS: Period. (repair)
(from Panova and Lyster, 2002)

One way to further deepen the taxonomy is to look whether the correction is conducted by the teacher, like recast and explicit correction, or learners are pushed to do self correction or peer correction. The term prompt is used to refer to the latter since teachers do not provide the correct form. Rather, they attempt to scaffold and help learners produce the right form by themselves. An interesting point about prompt is that it presupposes the language learners have already internalized, at least partially, some kind of knowledge of certain language items or structures. In other words, it is expected that learners use the language that is already part of their language repertoire yet they need some kind of automatization or restructuring to enhance their command on its use.

One could further assume that feedback strategies introduced above could also be divided into two broad categories of implicit and explicit feedback. Recast, clarification request, repetition and even paralinguistic signs such as gesture and facial expression could be considered as implicit corrective techniques employed by the teachers to indicate the existence of language errors while preserving the centrality of the meaning(Long, 1996). The aim here is to indirectly and incidentally inform learners of non-target like use of the

language so as not to interrupt the flow of communication (Long, ibid). On the other hand, explicit correction, metalinguistic knowledge and elicitation, to a great extent, could be grouped as explicit error correction since the learners' ill-formed structure is overtly signaled to and brought up into the their conscious attention. Such dual dichotomy as we will later see is not uncontroversial though.

Before we move on to examine the studies that have compared the effect of different feedback type, it is worth mentioning some methodological problems stemming from different definition of recast as well as the way it is operationalized in different studies. The overview is noteworthy since it, at least partially, offers some explanations to rather contradictory research findings that have addressed recast.

2.10. RECAST: A PROBLEM OF DEFINITION AND OPRATIONALIZATION

A problem with examining the effect of recast as implicit feedback on L2 learning is that it is not easy to ascertain the exact degree of implicitness present in the studies that have addressed this feedback type. Though generally defined as implicit, a review of L2 literature would reveal different operationalization of recast resulting in various degree of implicitness. Doughty and Varela (1998), for instance, conducted a study on content based science classes where students received what they called 'corrective recasting' on the use of simple past and conditional past on both written and oral lab reports. Once students made mistakes, the instructors reformulated the learners' errors adding emphatic stress to the deviant part raising learners' awareness towards the ungrammaticality of the language structure they have produced. This, to a large extent, would render the recast from an exclusively implicit correction, following Long definition, to the type of correction in which at least some degree of explicitness is present. Here is an example of the type of correction they provided;

L: I think that the worm will go under the soil.
T: I *think* that the worm *will* go under the soil.

L: (no response)
L: I *thought* that the worm *would* go under the soil.
T: I *thought* that the worm *would* go under the soil
(Daughty &Varela, 1998, P. 124).

Lyster (1998, p.74) made this point earlier when she wrote:

> "[R]search on the effect of recast on classroom SLA has considered not so much the effect of recast, but rather the effect of recast in combination of other explicit clues; the real issue, thus, more have to do with the nature of effective combinations."

If we assume that the emphatic stress employed in the teachers' response to the learners' errors in Daughty and Varela study by itself plays a role in the way the correction is interpreted by learners _ which, of course, is not much an unexpected assumption_, then we face the fact that the studies on recast have failed to provide a unanimous definition of this feedback type as they have failed to clearly state the degree of the emphatic stress used in their studies (Nicoles et al., ibid). In other words, the way recast is usually operationalized in research studies ranges in an explicit/implicit continuum (Sheen, 2006 p.364) which is a departure from Long (1998) definition of recast as an implicit corrective feedback. Sheen (2006: 365) has rounded up this point:

> ..given the various terms and working definitions used in studies of recasts, it may be unhelpful to lump together all the different types under the single label of 'recasts' and also to assume that all recasts are categorically implicit.

She further adds that the more explicit recast, the more salient it becomes which in turn raises the likelihood of its effectiveness. She calls for a comparison between the implicit and explicit recast as well as different types of explicit feedback:

> What is now needed is a study that compares the relative effectiveness of explicit and implicit types of recasts on learners' uptake, repair and learning. If it was found that explicit recasts proved more effective (as the study reported here suggests might be the case), it would then be possible to design a study that compared the effectiveness of such recasts with other types of feedback (p. 386).

The question made above is suggestive in that it postulates the possibility of operationlizing different types of recast by manipulating the use of emphatic stress and controlling the illocutionary force of correction. The created recasts could be hence grouped to either implicit or explicit categories, and thereby it becomes possible to compare the latter type with another explicit feedback move, for instance prompts, as it is aimed in our study.

One last point to consider is the methodological limitation of the studies that treat recast as an implicit feedback type once they aspire to find out its impact on the learning of specific language form. The point is that the lack of emphatic stress, as described above, by itself does not safeguard the implicit illocutionary force of feedback type. It is feared that once a specific language item is repeatedly targeted by the instructors through recast, the provided feedback may loose its implicit force since the repeated correction make language learners cognizant of the corrective force of recast. Ellis and Sheen highlighted the point:

> Indeed, the fact that learners receive frequent, intensive recast directed at a single structure (as in Doughty and Varela's 1998, and Han's studies) encouraged the treatment of recast as explicit feedback (Ellis & Sheen 2006: 584).

The methodological problem described above is hard to do away (Erlam, personal correspondence) and may undermine the implicit force of the studies that address recast.

2.11. IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT FEEDBACK

The question at issue is which feedback types, implicit or explicit, is more effective in learning L2 and whether their effects are different with regard to different language area, such as pronunciation or lexicon, morpho-syntactic. Long (1996), Long and Robinson (1998), for instance, argue for the effective role of recast as an implicit feedback. Long maintained that recast is effective in language acquisition precisely because it is implicit. It is the implicit force of the recast that allow learners to map form and function without impeding the flow of communication. The juxtaposition of the ungrammatical use of language with the corrected form provided by the instructor sets the context for a cognitive

comparison between two, and hence allows learners to notice the difference between their erroneous form and targetlike use of language. This becomes possible in a communicatively contingent discoursal context where meaning is held constant and learners could free up their processing resources to attend form and thereby develop their target language knowledge (Daughty, 2001; Long, 1998). The explicit forms of correction, on the other hand, interrupt the natural flow of communication, impede the form function mapping and don't have much effect on developing the target language knowledge of the learners (Daughty, 2001). Long make the point as he states:

> "the contingency of recasts on deviant learner output means that incorrect and correct utterances are juxtaposed. This allows the learner to compare the two forms side by side, so to speak, and to observe the contrast, an opportunity not presented by non-contingent utterances, i.e., models" (Long, 1996, p. 4).

Other scholars (such as Ellis 1993, and Swain 1995) take the opposite stand and argue that making explicit correction and bringing to the awareness of the learners the erroneous form could be more effective feedback type than other implicit forms of correction since the latter runs the risk of failing to make its corrective force noticed by learners. This is mainly because of potential ambiguity imbedded in the indirectness of implicit type of feedback. Learners may simply fail to realize whether the provided recast is a confirmation move or a correction of an error. For example, Chaudron (1988) in his study of repetition found that learners consider this implicit feedback type ambiguous since it was difficult for them to realize whether the provided feedback was negative evidence, corrective in nature, or was positive and used to express understanding and expressing the agreement with the speakers.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) study of the classroom discourse also cast light to the ambiguity related to the implicit feedback. They showed that while recast was the most commonly used feedback type in the observed French immersion classes, it consisted of some 55% of the all teachers feedback move, it was the least likely feedback type to lead to students' uptake (31%) and the least effective feedback type in terms of eliciting students repair. Recast only led to 17% of repair_ successful immediate repetition of the teacher's

correction_ the lowest among other feedback types; elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, clarification requests, and repetition.

In further analysis of findings of this study, Lyster (1998) note that teacher's intention in the use of recast may not be always corrective, and, at times, it could be used to express approval for the well formed structures as well as sustaining topic continuation. She, in fact, found that almost three quarters of teachers' recast are conducted for non-corrective purposes, an evidence that reveals the source of ambiguity inherited in recast which indicates why learners might fail to assign the right value (corrective or confirming) to the primary intention of teachers' use of recast. In a meta-analysis of studies on recasts Nicholas et al. (2001) concluded ' in general, recasts appear more effective in contexts where it is clear to the learner that the recast is a reaction to the accuracy of form, not the content, of the original utterance'.

There might be, of course, other explanations to account for the learners' different perception of recast. The implicitness or explicitness of the feedback type may not be exclusively related to the way of provision of them by teachers, but it could be also a matter of the individual differences among learners. Learners with higher metalinguistic knowledge, for example, may observe more explicit force in recast (Ellis& Sheen, 2006). Sheen (2004) study, for example, revealed that L2 adult learners in EFL and ESL context use more instances of correct use of uptake (a repetition of the final correct form of the feedback) following recast than children in immersion classes. The findings of the study might be interpreted as adults' superior ability in ascribing more explicit force to recast than that of children. Ammar and Spada (2006) also found that more proficient learners were more successful at perceiving the corrective purpose of recast than less proficient learners. In their study, the more proficient learners benefit equally from recast and prompt while the less proficient learners could only benefit from prompt.

In short, while there is still disagreement over whether implicit recast is more effective than other explicit types of correction, the bulk of argument seems to advantage more explicit

types of correction. This is likely so because recasts are not purely used by teachers as corrective devices but as a conversational move that could employed a range of functions such as confirmation, expressing agreement or topic continuation. The individual differences could also affect the result as more proficient learners might be more capable of assigning the right value to the intended function of recast than less capable learners.

2.12. EXPERIMENTAL AND QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES ADDRESSING RECAST

This part covers the studies whose findings cast light on variables that contribute to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of recast. Iwashita (2003) found some evidence for the selective effect of recast on target language structure. He opted to compare the effect of positive and negative feedback on the learning of two Japanese grammatical structures (locative initial construction and verb morpheme *te*-form verb). Recast along with negotiation was considered as a negative feedback and their effects were compared with positive feedback which was operationalized through different types of models[7]. The results revealed a significant effect for recast on one of the two target structures; *te*-form verbs. Positive feedback i.e. models; however, turned out to be effective for both language structures but its impact, unlike recast, was restrained by the proficiency of learners. Only above-average learners could benefit from positive evidence while learners of all proficiency level benefited from recast that targeted *te*-form structure. Though selective, the positive effect of recast benefited all language learners the same.

The selective effect of recast was also reported in Long et al. (1998) study in which they compared the effect of recast and models on learning of Japanese fronted locative constructions and adjective ordering and Spanish object topicalization and adverb placement. While no significant gain was reported for both Japanese structures and Spanish

[7]. Model is kind of positive evidence that follows the *targetlike* utterance of learners and provides a target model of grammatical feature or complete learners' incomplete utterances (Iwashita 2003, p.15).

object topicalization, the recast group significantly outperformed the model group on adverb placement rules in Spanish. The findings provided more evidence that recast may be effective for learning some structures and not for the others.

Ishida (2003) examined the effect of intensive recast on learning of Japanese aspectual form *-te i-(ru)* by four English native speakers using a time-series design. The results showed for significant effect of recast in the accuracy of learners with regard to the target structure in both immediate and delayed posttests in general. However, upon further analysis of data, it was found that, once more the positive effect of recast was not homogeneous. As for the effect of recast on the various meanings that the target structure-*te i-(ru)* denotes, Ishita showed that the effect of recast was mostly reflected on resultative aspect marker than progressive or habitual aspect marker. The researcher argued that the learners' developmental readiness might be a factor for the selective effect of recast.

Leeman (2003) conducted a study in which she tried to investigate the different effect of negative and positive evidence in recasts. In her study, she put the participant in four different groups; recast group which received negative evidence and enhanced salience of positive evidence, negative evidence group in which the source of the problem was indicated but no correction was occurred, enhance salience group which received positive evidence with stress and intonation to make the target language item salient, and the control group. The data analysis revealed that recast group and the group that received enhanced salience of positive evidence outperformed both the control group and the group that only received negative evidence suggesting the idea that implicit negative evidence of recast may not be crucial factor in language learning and the effectiveness of recast might be limited to the enhanced salience of positive evidence that it provides.

Philp (2003) found that the proficiency of the learners, the length of recast and the number changes made in recast may affect the accuracy with which recast is noticed and recalled. She found that high level language learners were better at accurate remembering of recast than low proficient learners. She also found that the length of recast and number of changes

made to the original utterance had a role in remembering of recast. The shorter the length of a recast, the higher the chances are that it will be remembered for the future use. Also, the more changes were made to the original utterance of learners, the less likely it is that learners will notice the recast.

Doughty and Varela (1998) studied the effect of recast on the learning of past and conditional past as time reference in middle school content-based ESL science classes. The development of learners on the target structure was measured on both oral and written measures. The findings showed a greater oral accuracy in the recast group. Although learners' accuracy has improved in both oral and written measures in the immediate posttest, it was only on oral tasks that learners displayed sustained development in delayed posttests. As already discussed, the recast in their study was overtly explicit in that they used emphatic stress and intonation, somewhat similar to what is employed in our study.

Overall the previous studies of recast show that the effectiveness of recast is rather selective in that different language structures might respond differently to the recast. This must be, of course, somehow related to the learnability hypothesis (Pienemann, 1989). Recast is more effective if language learners are cognitively ready and at the right developmental stage for it. Other factors such as length of recast and the number of changes and the explicitness of recast may affect whether it is noticed and submitted for mental processing by the learners or not. Of all these variables, the effect of explicitness of recast in learning of L2 structure is the focus of our study.

2.13. STUDIES COMPARING DIFFERENT FEEDBACK TYPES

Several studies have investigated whether different feedback types are more effective in leading to SLA. In an earlier study, Carroll and Swain (1993) compared four different feedback groups; two explicit and two implicit feedback types, on learning English dative alternation. Explicit feedback groups included explicit hypothesis rejection (where correct answer was provided along with metalinguistic explanation) and explicit rejection (where

only the inaccuracy of the learners' utterances was stated e.g. your answer is incorrect). Implicit feed back also consisted of two types; modeling or recast (where learners mistakes were corrected with no further information provided) and indirect metalinguistic feedback (where learners were asked if they were sure about their answers). The findings showed that all explicit and implicit feedback groups outperformed the control group, which did not receive any feedback in learning, in the immediate posttest. The experimental groups also managed to maintain their significant performance on delayed posttest one week later. It was also found that the most explicit feedback type i.e. direct metalinguistic feedback outperformed other groups_ explicit rejection, recast and indirect metalinguistic group making them to draw the conclusion that the more explicit a feedback type is, the more effective it becomes since it overtly indicates where exactly the problem is located.

Chen (1996) in a similar study attempted to replicate Swain and Carroll experiment and came up with rather different findings. She examined the effect of three different types of feedback; metalinguistic, explicit rejection and recast on learning Chinese classifiers. The findings revealed that metalinguistic and recast group outperformed the explicit rejection and control group on the immediate posttest both in oral and written test. However, the positive effect of CF was not fully sustained over time. In the delayed posttest which was conducted six weeks later, no significant difference was detected in the oral test. In the written test, only metalinguistic group outperformed the explicit rejection and control group. She argued that her findings provide evidence for the effective role of explicit CF (metalinguistic feedback) and cautions against the transient effect of CF in oral production.

Dekeyser (1993) examined the effect of CF on Dutch high school students learning French as a foreign language. Language learners were placed into two groups. In the experimental group, language teacher was required to explicitly correct all language errors that learners made during the communicative tasks. In the control group, the teacher was required to avoid providing corrective feed back unless learners explicitly demanded it. The results evident no significant difference between control and experimental group after a year long treatment. The findings questioned the effectiveness of extensive error correction on

communicative activities; though, as Dekeyser put other factors, such as aptitude, previous achievement, anxiety and motivation might be at work and exerted their effect on the final results.

Lyster (2004) made a study to investigate the effect of form focused instruction accompanied by different feedback types on students' ability to assign the grammatical gender in French. Subjects were placed in four groups based on the treatment type each received; FFI group which received form focused instruction aimed to draw learners' attention to the target language item, FFI recast group which in addition to FFI received recast on their errors, FFI prompt group which received prompt following their errors, and control group which followed their regular syllabus and did not receive any special FFI. The results of written and oral immediate and delayed post-tests showed a significant improvement for the groups that received FFI instruction. Also the results of written post-test exhibit a clear effect for prompt than recast group. The difference of the oral production was only marginally in favor of prompt group. Though prompt group performed better than the other groups in the immediate posttest oral test, it failed to keep the difference between other FFI groups in the delayed posttest.

In a recent study Ellis, Loewen and Erlam (2006) opted for examining the effect of implicit and explicit corrective feedback on learning of regular simple past '-ed' in terms of implicit and explicit knowledge. Metalinguistic correction was used as explicit and recast as implicit feedback type to correct the erroneous language structures produced by the learners. Untimed grammaticality judgment test and metalinguitic test were applied to tap the learners' explicit knowledge and oral imitation test was used to measure the learners' implicit knowledge. The findings showed no significant difference in immediate post test. The result of delayed posttest, however, revealed that explicit group, the group that received metalinguistic correction considerably out-performed the recast and control groups. The positive effect of explicit correction was also more noticeable in language tests that measured implicit knowledge of learners than explicit knowledge. The overall findings could be interpreted as the superiority of explicit correction over the implicit ones.

Ammar and Spada (2006) in quasi-experimental research compared the effect of recast and prompt as corrective feedback in intensive English classes for French native speakers in Canada. Two experimental groups, recast group and prompt group received the predetermine feedback types on the erroneous use of possessive determiner *his* and *her*. Based on the participants' results on pretest, the three groups were further divided into low and high proficiency groups, creating all in all four experimental and two control groups. The statistical analyses of the data acquired on the passage-correction and oral description showed that both experimental groups performed better than control group, which received no feedback. It was also shown that the benefits achieved from different feedback types were related to the proficiency level of the learners. Whereas the more proficient learners benefits equally from both prompt and recast, the low proficiency groups benefited significantly better from prompt than recast. To account for their findings they argued that the explicit way of using prompt in their study along with the active participation of the subjects during the repair move might make prompt a better CF choice than recast. The corrective force of recast, on the other hand, is usually hidden and learners don't have enough opportunity to draw on their resources and produce the right grammatical items.

Ammar (2008) reanalyzed the same data to find out about the various developmental stages that participants in recast and prompt groups moved as well as the speed with which they retrieved their morphosyntactic knowledge about the third person possessive pronouns. Picture description tasks were used to tap the accuracy of learners and development stages they went through, and computerized fill in the blank tasks were used to measure the speed of retrieval. The analysis of the results showed that while all subjects in the prompt group managed to move to the post emergence stages, the last three developmental stages, only two third of recast group participants managed to do so. The positive effect of prompt was also reflected in low proficiency learners. All low proficiency learners in prompt group managed to reach post emergence stages while only half of subjects in low proficiency level of recast group reached those stages. On the speed of retrieval and automatization both prompt and control group displayed more gain over recast group.

Overall she concluded that the findings proved for the superior role of prompt for learning of morphosyntactic of L2 especially for low proficiency students. All the same, she warns that the target structure used in her study, possessive third person pronoun, was transparent , and drawing on research on cognitive psychology that shows that the effect of implicit learning is more reflected on complex structures she invited that the future research should be conducted on more redundant language structure, such as third person '-s', which is the target language structure in our study.

Overall, the general research findings observe a positive trend between the explicit force of corrective feedback and its effectiveness in making change in the language of learners. The more explicit the illocutionary force of feedback is, the more likely it is to be noticed by learners and later incorporated into their competence. As already mentioned, there is, of course, other factors at work, such as individual differences, that may reserve one from assigning a direct correspondence between the explicitness and effectiveness of corrective feedback. Also, as found by Sheen (2004) and Ammar and Spada (2006), the more proficient learners are more likely to observe the corrective force of implicit correction such as recast than less proficient learners.

2.14. STUDIES ADDRESSING CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN TURKEY

The number of experimental and quasi-experimental studies that have addressed the effect of corrective feedback in Turkey is rather weak. Şahin (2006) observed 24 hours of four immediate level language learners of EFL grammar classes and found out that recast (35.78%), elicitation (24.21%), metalinguistic feedback (22.10%), clarification request (11.05%), explicit correction (5.26%), and repetition (2%), in a decreasing order, were CF moves used in these classes. The order, however, changed once CF was arranged in terms

of amount of uptake that they brought about[8]. Elicitation (54.71%), clarification (48.83%), metalinguistic feedback (38.88%), repetition (33.33), explicit correction (30%) and recast (26.47%) in the decreasing order were the most successful CF moves to effect uptakes in learners. In this sense, like Lyster and Ranta (1998) findings, Şahin study showed that although recast was the most common used CF type, it was the least effective, among all CF types, to lead to uptake. Şahin concluded that since recast and explicit correction was the least likely to lead learners' uptake, pushing learners to do self correction is more advantageous than providing the right language form to the learners.[9]

Kılıç (2007) conducted a similar study at the third grade EFL settings. While Şahin study was done in grammar classes, Kılıç chose speaking classes. The analysis of 24 hours of the video tape of the interaction between teacher and students revealed that recast (56.2%), translation (26.2%), explicit correction (9.5%) prompt (elicitation, repetition, meatlinguistic information and clarification collectively) (8.1%), in the decreasing order, comprised the most used CF moves. The findings also showed that in speaking classes language teachers tend to be more tolerant with learners' error in general and corrected only 24.5% of their errors. He also found that the grammatical error and lexical errors were the language areas which respectively received the least and the most amount of errors correction. Drawing upon the findings, he made the point that the type of activities may affect the use or lack of use of the CF. Teachers make fewer corrections on grammatical errors in speaking classes since the primary focus in these classes is usually on fluency and meaning.

Mutlu (2006) investigated the effect of implicit and explicit feedback on the learning of different stages of question making in a public primary school. Two experimental groups (implicit and explicit groups) and a control group were used in the study. The implicit

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[8] . Uptake is defined as "a student's utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance" (Lyster&Ranta, 1997).

[9] The issue that whether the absence or presence of uptake could be considered as language learning is controversial though. Gass (2003), for instance, argues that uptake of learners could not be taken as noticing as it could be simple parrot like repetition of others' reformulations.

feedback group received recast, repetition and clarification request and the explicit feedback received explicit error correction. Language learners' development was measured through oral tasks that were administered once prior the experiment, once immediately after and once in delayed posttest, some 8 weeks later. The findings showed a superior effect for explicit corrective feedback in the immediate posttest over implicit feedback. This effect, however, was faded away in delayed posttest and implicit group outperformed both control and explicit group. Mutlu interpreted the results as the efficacy of implicit over explicit feedback. An important point about her study was that the recast that she used in the implicit group was not very implicit. As she mentioned, the recast used in the study was operationalized through intonation and stress, and therefore, the corrective force of it became more salient to the language learners (p.52). The effective of the implicit group could then be attributed, at least partially, to the enhanced salient use of recast in this study.

Büyükbey (2007) used a quasi-experimental study to explore the effect of repetition as a CF in learning various grammatical structures in EFL grammar classes. A rather peculiar methodology was used in the study. No predetermined target language structure was chosen beforehand. The experimental group of the study was exposed to repetition every time learners made grammatical mistakes. The second group of participants, the control group, received all other types of CF, except for repetition, upon any deviant use of language structures in their grammar classes. Two different set of questions based on the categories of grammatical errors that the learners in each study group made were prepared for each group (14 written questions, for 14 errors), and administered to the learners after the experiment. Language learners' preference for different types of CF was also gathered through stimulated recall sessions as learners watched the video tape of the treatment sessions. The results of the study showed that overall the repetition group performed better on the grammar posttest than the other group. Both teacher and learners expressed their preference for repetition as well[10].

[10] It seems that the study has suffered from some methodological shortcomings making it difficult to rely very much on its findings.

The next chapter deals with the methodology of the study. It explains the design, participants, setting, teaching materials, testing instruments, treatments and the general procedures used in the current research.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the methodology used in the present study. Section 3.2 briefly describes the design. Section 3.3 provides information about the setting in which the experiment was conducted and the participants who took part in it. Section 3.4 introduces the target structure of the study and the rationale for choosing it. Section 3.5 examines the type of materials used during treatment sessions. Section 3.6 explains the treatment offered to the experimental groups. Section 3.7 introduces the testing instruments used to measure the possible development of the subjects. Section 3.8 elaborates on the scoring system and the criteria applied for the rating of collected data. Finally, section 3.9 outlines the procedures employed in the study.

3.2 DESIGN

This was a quasi-experimental study. Three intact classes from the summer program were selected as the population of the study. To increase the comparability of the groups, the three classes were chosen based on the mean results of their students on previous achievement exams and the suggestions of some of the instructors who were teaching in the same classes in the summer program. The three groups were randomly assigned into experimental and control groups. Both the experimental groups and control group conducted some task-based activities aimed to elicit the use of target language structure. The experimental groups received the predetermined feedback once they failed to produce the correct form of the target language feature. The experimental group 1 received corrective recast and experimental group 2 prompt feedback types. The control group did

not receive any ‘structure focused’ feedback. The experiment took approximately one month to complete. During the experiment, a set of pretests, immediate and delayed posttests were employed to address the research questions. Untimed grammaticality judgment tests, oral narrative tests were used to measure participants learning development regarding the target language structures in different stages. Treatments were extended into three teaching sessions and were all conducted by the researcher. The target language structure was third person ‘-s’.

3.3. SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS

The experiment was conducted in the Prep school of Fatih University in Istanbul. The students were taking an intensive summer program where they received language instruction on academic English 24 hours per week. Students met five days a week, five hours a day except for Fridays when the classes were held for four hours. The teaching hours were divided into the subsets of reading, writing, listening, video activities and grammar. The largest weight of teaching hours was given to improving the students’ writing skill with eight hours of instruction per week and the least to video activities with only two hours of class time a week. Students in each class had the opportunity to receive their instruction from four or five different teachers. The courses were designed with the original intention of preparing students to pursue their future academic career, so the core of the material used in the skill-based classes was mainly academic texts.

All of the students attending the summer school had already failed to achieve the passing mark of 70 assigned by the school during the fall semester and had to repeat the program in the summer. Despite having a year of language program in the Prep school as well receiving language instruction during the previous years in high schools, most of these students had failed to reveal a considerable improvement in their oral language proficiency, both in speaking and listening.

Volunteer students from three intact classes were selected for the study. The researchers used his discretion to exclude the participants who did not fully follow the instruction in the pretests. Half hearted or reluctant participants who might have used the study as an opportunity to escape their regular classes and provide inaccurate data were excluded from the study. Thirty- nine, twenty males and nineteen females, participants were in the end chosen as the population of the study. The age range varied between 18 and 24. Except for two participants who were from Azerbaijan and Bosnia, the rest were Turks. Of these thirty- nine participants, thirty-one took all three stages of oral tests. One participant failed to appear for the first oral post test and hence was reported as missing data. Seven learners were also left out form oral test by the researcher because their language proficiency was below the threshold level required for the experiment; they kept using present continuous or other erroneous language structures in the occasions when they were supposed to use the target language. The data of one of the learners who produced fewer than four obligatory occasions in two testing sessions was also excluded from the study. On the written test, thirty-six participants took all three tests. Of the original thirty-nine participants, three were absent at the pretest session so their posttest data were removed from the analysis.

3.4. TARGET STRUCTURE

The grammatical structure targeted in the study was simple present third person '-s'. The selection of this structure was motivated by theoretical considerations. For one thing, this structure represents an example of 'system learning' in contrast to item learning (Hulstijn and De Graaf, 1994). While item learning has mainly concerned with instance-based language learning in which linguistic items like vocabulary or irregular simple past are memorized, the system learning is related to the learning of language rules that governs the construction of language structures. Once the patterns involved in the construction of language structure are learned, they could be generalized and used to generate novel instances of the same structures. The present study, hence, aspires to cast light upon the effect of different kinds of corrective feedback on human mind's ability to extract language

rules from input data as well as the way the knowledge of language system could be put into practice to produce accurate language production. One could also entertain the idea that the findings of this study could offer some general implications for the learning of other language systems as well.

The second reason for choosing the target feature is concerned with the difficulty level of this structure. The need for the research studies that examine the effect of different CF on language structures with various degree of difficulty was announced by Ammar and Spada (2006, p. 566):

> The question as to whether so-called hard or easy grammar is more amenable to different types of CF is an empirical question and more research is needed to investigate this.

Contrastive analysis of English and Turkish as well as the personal experience of the researcher has shown that the use of target grammar feature is problematic for Turkish speakers at least as far as the natural 'conversional pressured' production of this structure is concerned. Despite years of language instructions, language learners, including Turks, fail to display an accurate use of this tense especially in a time restricted condition where there are compelled to produce the tense orally. The most common type of the errors made by the nonnative speakers is the omission of the inflectional morpheme '-s' when it is necessary. Below is an example of the students' erroneous use of this structure drawn from the data collected from the study:

L. My friend take computer class every weekend.

Researchers have argued about the intrinsic difficulty of this language feature (1988, Dekeyser, 1998; R. Ellis 1990, 2006). . Nunan (1988) stated that though it may appear as a rather simple grammatical structure, the acquisition of this language feature is notoriously difficult psycholinguistically. Ellis (2006), who examined structural difficulties in term of explicit and implicit knowledge holds that third person '-s' could be passed as relatively difficult language structures in term of implicit knowledge. Once the language learners are

under time pressure and their focus on meaning, the accurate use of this language structure might not be much expected.[11] He further argued that though it usually appears early in structural syllabuses, third person '-s' is a language structure that is acquired late (p. 432). Earlier, drawing on Pienemann (1989) he made a similar point that learning third person '-s' is difficult since it involves establishing the right connection, despite the possible distance, between the subject and verb (Ellis, 1990).

Dekeyser (1998, p. 45) likewise took a similar stand as he argued for the difficulty of this language feature reasoning that the mapping between form and function in the third person is far from clear since a single morpheme is used to express various semantic concepts (present tense, third person, singular) as well as carrying a lot of exceptions (e.g. the form should change once the verb is used next to models). Ammar (2008, p. 202) highlighted the difficulty of learning third person '-s'. Drawing on Dekeyser (2005), she argued that this structure is difficult to learn because it is redundant and does not contribute to the meaning of what is communicated.

The fact that learning third person '-s' is relatively difficult as it is suggested by Ellis (2006) and Ammar (2008) adds a unique feature to the study. A call to conduct studies to investigate the effect of different corrective feedback on so called difficult language structures was announced by Ammar and Spada (2006, p. 566)

> The question of whether so called hard or easy grammar are more amenable to different types of CF is empirical question and research is needed to investigate this.

In a similar vein, Ammar (2008) highlights that the future studies need to probe the impact of different types CF on learning of difficult structures:

> Research that investigates the effects of prompts and recasts on the acquisition of a more complex structure or more than one structure at a time is required (p. 202).

[11]. Ellis made the point that a rule that is implicitly difficult might be explicitly easy and sometimes vice versa. The third person, the target language structure of our study, is a pertinent example, where a considerable difference between implicit and explicit knowledge is found (2006, p. 449).

3.5. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

For the purpose of the study the three participating groups were provided with the same type of materials and roughly received the same amount of instruction. The three treatment sessions of 30 to 45 minutes were run with two and three day interval among each session. The participants in three groups were divided into pairs and conducted communicative tasks. The tasks were operationalized according to R Ellis (2003) definition of tasks; that is, they included a gap, they required learners to focus primarily on meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, and they had a clearly defined outcome. They also constituted what Ellis called focused tasks in that they were designed to encourage the use of particular linguistic forms, and to this end, learners were provided with certain linguistic prompts.

Six stories, two for each experiment session, were used for the study. All stories were written by researcher and already pilot studied in his own classes to ensure that they create the desired amount of target language as well as fulfilling the communicative objectives of task based activities. The first two stories ideas were inspired from the first unit of Headway Pre-intermediate. The stories, however, were modified and extended to fit the objective of the experiment. The stories of second task were originated by the researcher himself. The story of third task (cleaner) was taken from an article in Understanding Ideas by Michael Swan. The text was originally written in authentic language so a great deal of modification was employed to adjust the text difficulty to the students' proficiency level. Some new parts were also added to the text (see appendix 1).

Task 1

In the first task, participants were required to read different versions of the same story written from the point of view of two main characters of the story. The two stories narrate a misunderstanding between two neighbors, each expressing their concern about the weird

behavior of the other without knowing the reason behind it (appendix 1 treatment1). Each student in pairs received different version of the same story. This way each pair of students had both versions of the story. Students were required to read their version of the story, retell it to their neighbors, jointly work out the source of the problem and ideally come up with a solution. All texts were written in simple present first person singular form and students were required to retell it using third person singular. At the end of the task, the instructor asked the students to collectively retell the story to the whole class, describe the problem and offer their suggestions as to how the problem could best be resolved. Students were not required to refer to the text once retelling the story to the class.

Task 2

Learners were once again paired and required to read two stories in which two teachers described their different teaching methods and the way they applied these methods in their Math classes (appendix 1 treatment 2). Each student read one of these stories, retold it to his or her neighbor, worked out the discrepancy between two different teaching styles and chose the teaching style they preferred expressing their reasons. The stories once again were written in simple present first person singular form, and students were required to retell it in third person singular. At the end of the task, the instructor asked the students to collectively retell the story to the whole class and describe their preference for each method. Students were not allowed to refer to the text once they were retelling the story to class.

Task 3

Similar to two previous tasks, students were paired and two different stories were distributed between them. In each story, a narrator described his/her job and daily life. The first one was the life of a seemingly prestigious but monotonous bank teller and the latter was apparently difficult but happy life of a cleaner. Students were required to read and retell the story to their friends and figure out which character had a better life and why. To

increase the interaction between the pairs, the students were told that each of them might be required to retell the other person's story. Students responses were gather collectively just the same (see appendix 1 treatment 3).

3.6. TREATMENT

Two different kinds of corrective feedback (corrective recast and prompt) were provided to the participants in the experimental groups when their utterances contained deviant use of target structure. In the explicit recast group, learners' erroneous utterances were corrected at two consecutive stages. In the first phase, students' erroneous sentences were repeated using emphatic stress and rising intonation where the deviant part existed. In the second phase, which immediately followed the first one, the instructor reformulated learners' utterance using falling intonation, and once again emphasizing the verb with added stress. Here is an example;

L. he check students' homework and then=
T. =He **check>** their homework. He **checks<** their homework

Key: = signifies overlapping elements; **bold font** signifies stress; > signifies rising intonation; < signifies falling intonation; L = learner; T = teacher

By using the super segmental manipulation, it was hoped that, the explicit force of correction became transparent to the learners, so that they could map their deviant form with the provided correct structure. It is also worth noting that the recast employed here lies at the explicit end of implicit and explicit dichotomy of recast (Sheen, 2006). It both overtly signaled to language learners that an error has been made and help them locate the place of the error. Such two phase implementation of recast group was adapted by Doughty and Varela (1998). The single difference between their recast type and the one used in the present study was that in their study there was some time interval between the first and second phase, the repetition and recast parts. This was used to prompt learners to initiate

self correction. There was no such time interval between the first and second phases of the feedback in the present study since the primary objective here was to compare teacher correction with student generated one.

In the prompt group repetition and elicitation were used to push learners to do self correction. Learners' erroneous utterances were repeated with emphatic stress and rising intonation making the existence of error clear to them. This happened two or three times with time interval between each repetition. It was hoped that learners would notice the existence of nontargetlike structure and use their own language resources to do the correction.

L. And her sister help him to clean the house
T. Her sister **help>** him, she **help>** him?
L. She helps him

Sometimes, however, repetition was followed by elicitation in which the instructor made a pause at the part of the sentence that needed repair so that students would "fill in the blank" by their own words. (see Lyster and Ranta, 1997, p. 48) . Below is an example;

L. He think this is right.
T. He **think>** this is right? He> …….?
L. thinks

Clarification recast and metalinguistic explanation were not included. Following Ammar and Spada (2006) suggestion, clarification request was excluded from prompt moves because it was assumed to be ambiguous i.e. learners may fail to realize the corrective purpose of the CF and mistake it as a response to meaning rather than form (Chaudron, 1977). It also proved to produce the least amount of learners repair in previous studies (Lyster and Ranta, 1997). Metalinguuistic feedback was excluded from prompt moves for two reasons. First, it was assumed that this feedback type, in isolation, is not often used in a natural classroom discourse to correct the errors concerning third person '-s'. Since simple

present is usually introduced at initial stages of language learning, teachers hardly correct students production in communicative tasks by offering metalinguistic explanation like 'this is the third person! Moreover, as it was already stated in the introduction chapter, our primary objective was to investigate the effect of prompt in isolation of metalinguistic explanation since the ample amount of research studies have already proved the strong effect of this feedback type. It goes without saying that although corrective feedback primarily addressed the speakers who had made the errors, it was carried out in a way that made the whole class involved in the task.

3.7. TESTING INSTRUMENTS

3.7.1 Untimed Grammaticality Judgment Test

The change in the knowledge of the learners in the simple present third person was measured once before the test (pretest), once immediately after the treatment (posttest) and once 10 days later for all three participating groups. Two language tests were employed to measure the implicit and explicit knowledge of test takers. The first measurement instrument was an Untimed Grammaticality Judgment Test (UGJT) used to gauge largely the students' explicit knowledge on the target language item (Ellis, 2005)[12]. The test consisted of 45 sentences 14 of them addressing the target language items, and the others were used as distracters. 22 of the sentences, including distracters, were grammatical and 23 were ungrammatical. Of 14 sentences that were targeting the third person '-s', 7 were grammatically correct and 7 were incorrect (see appendix 2). Below are examples of incorrect and correct sentences employed in the study.

Tom's brother smoke cigarette when he has exams.

[12] I use the term '*largely'* here because according to Ellis (2005) grammatical and ungrammatical items of this test tap two different sources of language knowledge; the grammatical items afford a better measure of implicit knowledge and ungrammatical sentences a better measure of explicit knowledge. As an oral narration task was used to measure the implicit knowledge of learners, it is the results of learners' performance on the ungrammatical items of UGJT that was taken to reflect the explicit knowledge of learners.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

II. ……

Maria's friend speaks two foreign languages.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

II. ……

The learners were supposed to take two different steps while answering these sentences:

1. To decide if the sentences were correct or incorrect grammatically
2. Correct the incorrect sentences.

In the first step learners had to choose among five different choices provided after each sentence; whether they believe the sentence was definitely correct, probably correct, definitely incorrect, probably incorrect, or they were not sure. In the second phase, they had to correct the incorrect sentences. The addition of the second phase, correcting the incorrect sentences, was innovative. I suspected that the pure indication of ungrammaticality of sentences may not truly reflect the learners' explicit knowledge about the structure in question. A learner may rightly indicate that a sentence is ungrammatical when he mistakenly perceives a structure other than the target one as the source of the problem. The decision of requiring test taker to correct the ungrammatical sentences was made to reduce the chance effect and increase the likelihood of exclusively measuring the internalization of target structure in study[13].

To actualize the second step, learners were informed that the incorrect sentences had only one grammatical mistake and there were no vocabulary or spelling errors. They were also informed that they could ask for the meaning of all the unknown words that they did not know. Each sentence was presented on separate answer sheet and students were asked to

[13] . Muranoi (2000) also took a similar measure and required an additional correction step in her study.

answer them one at a time. As stated above, the test was untimed so the learners took their time and answered the questions at their own self pace, but once they were done with a question, they could not return and correct their mistakes. The reason for employing an untimed test, instead of a timed one, was that as it was argued by Ellis (2004, 2005), explicit knowledge is best measured when there is no time pressure upon test takers[14]. It is tapping the explicit knowledge of learners which was the main objective of using this test in the study.

Prior to the application of the test in the research, it was pilot studied with four volunteer students who had varying degree of language proficiency. Debriefing recall sessions were held in which learners mentioned what they thought at the time they answered the questions. The objective of pilot study was to detect the possible unnoticed pitfall of each test item. Final changes on test items were administrated based on the feedback received from these students.

For posttests, some minor changes, such as names and places, were applied to the pretest. The sentences were then randomly scrambled to create two different versions of posttests. To show the effect of treatment over time the majority of the items remained intact in both post-tests.

3.6.2. Oral production tasks

Oral narrative task was chosen to measure the oral production and implicit knowledge of learners. The task had more or less the same structure as the materials used in the treatment sessions; three different texts were written about the daily life of three ordinary characters.

[14]. Ellis argued about the different ways through which language learners and users employ their implicit and explicit knowledge. To Ellis, the use of implicit knowledge is usually generated by the individuals' feelings rather than their conscious application of rules, their main focus is primarily on the meaning, and they conduct the task under the real life time pressure. The use of explicit knowledge, on the other hand, is carried out under no time pressure where learners could rely on their explicit or even meta-linguistic knowledge, and when the focus of the activities are mainly on language form instead of meaning.

The first story, used in the pretest, was about the daily life of an employee, Lucy, who worked in an engineering company, and the misunderstanding that happened between her and her colleague. In the second story, which was used in immediate posttest, a shift was made in the narrator and the same story was told from Lucy's friend point of view. In other words, an identical problem between two people was written from the points of view of two different characters of the story (see appendix 3). For the delayed posttest a new story was written and used. It was a simplified and modified version of a text taken from Understanding Ideas by Michael Swan in which a night sister described her daily life, predicaments and awards that she had in her job.

All three stories were written in simple present first person singular; however, as it was the case with the treatment sessions, the learners were supposed to read and retell the story in third person singular. In other words, they had to switch the language of narration from first person into third person. This made the use of target language structure mandatory and reduced the effect of rote memorization. To make the learners remember the main points of each story, at the end of each text a list of important events_ in the form of words or phrases_ was included in a chronological order (see appendix 3). All three texts were already pilot studied in the researcher's own classes some two months earlier to ensure that they provide the desired amount of target structure.

Students were given roughly 5 minutes to read the text and get prepared for the narration. The text was then withdrawn and learners were required to retell the story by heart. To add to the spontaneity of the tasks, learners were not informed that they need to switch the narration from first person into third person during 5 minutes preparation.

To help the (especially less proficient) learners remember the story, the students' narration was conducted in an interview manner in which interviewer used prompt questions to make the participant remember the parts that they may have missed due to memory failures. The question- answer design of the task increased the likelihood of producing more target-like structures, keeping the primary focus of learners on meaning as well as adding to the

spontaneity of the task. This, in turn, increased the likelihood of measuring the implicit knowledge of the test takers. Each interview session took roughly 10 minutes to complete and students' responses were recorded on a personal computer in the researcher's office and later submitted for statistical analysis. Below is an example of how the oral narration conducted.

- L. ….then she takes the break and ….= (long pause)
- T. (helping the learner to remember the next part of the story)= …her job in the morning is different from her job in the afternoon, what does she do in the morning?
- L… ehh ..she washes the dishes, cleans the bed …..

Precautions were taken not to provide feedback on the grammatical errors of the learners. It was feared that recast, if provided, could have made learners become aware of their erroneous use of the target language, and thereby, affect the accuracy of their future production. This could have in turn undermined the reliability of the data.

3.8. SCORING DECISIONS

This part explains the schemes used for scoring the two different tests used in the study; UGJT and oral narration.

3.8.1 UGJT

Different scoring rubrics were applied for the two language tests (UGJT and Oral Narration) used in the study. As mentioned above, of 45 sentences used in UGJT 14 targeted third person '-s': 7 correct 7 incorrect. Students' responses were scored as either correct (1 point) or incorrect (0 point). As we already mentioned, the UGJT used here had an additional part of asking for the correction of the ungrammatical items. This was considered as a reasonable measure to reduce the effect of chance.

For the 7 correct sentences learners who indicated the sentence as either "absolutely correct" or "probably correct" received 1 point. The learners' incorrect response to the correct sentences was also granted with points if they indicated that a mistake had happened in places other than verb choice. This decision was made since learners were already informed that incorrect sentences contained only one mistake. For example, if learners marked a sentence like

A plane flies from here to London every Fridays.

as incorrect and attempted to correct it by changing the article "A" into "The";

The plane flies from here to London every Fridays.

Then a score would be granted to them since they did not consider the use of third person '-s' as a mistake; their linguistic competence verified the correct use of the target tense.

For 7 incorrect sentences the case was somewhat different though. To receive a point, learners were required to indicate either the sentences were absolutely incorrect or probably incorrect, and also correct the incorrect sentences. For example, in the following sentence;

Rice grow in wet climate.

They should choose one of two alternatives of *definitely incorrect* and *probably incorrect* and then correct the sentence into

Rice grows in wet climate.

If they marked the sentence as ungrammatical but failed to spot and correct the deviant verb_ for instance, they corrected the above sentence as *Rice grow at wet climate_* no point was given to them.

3.7.2. Oral production

Following Muranoi (2000) scoring rubric, learners' production of third person '-s' first scored for the correct use in obligatory contexts. This score then became the numerator of a ratio whose denominator was the sum of the number of obligatory contexts and the number of nonobligatory contexts in which third person '-s' were supplied inappropriately. Below are some general types of the errors occurred and the criteria used to score them.

- **He ***work*** in the office.**

The sentence is scored as incorrect use of target language. The obligatory occasion is created but the right grammar feature was not used. The sentence represents a typical example of a large majority of the errors (more than 90 percent roughly speaking) occurred throughout the experiment.

- **He goes to the farm and he ***working*** there**.

The use of gerund 'working' in the second clause was scored as an incorrect use of target language item. It was assumed that the use of simple present in the first part of the sentence creates an obligatory occasion for the use of same grammar item in the second part.

- **My father is going to the farm and is working until evening**.

The sentence was excluded from analysis. It is scored neither as correct nor as incorrect use of target language item. The reason for excluding such data from analysis was that it was assumed that the error was made not at the level of the correct use of the inflectional morpheme's' but at a higher level of choosing the right tense type to express a routine activity at present time. The learner might have correctly used '-s', had they made a right tense choice from the beginning. Students who repeatedly used present continuous instead of simple present were excluded from the study.

- **They ***goes*** to work together.**

Despite the lack of creation of obligatory occasion, overgeneralization was scored as incorrect use of target language. It was assumed that learners' failure to use the target language item in the right place provides evidence that the structure had not been internalized.

- **She works in a company…. eh….. she works in a company and …..**

Only one instance of correct use is scored here. The latter is labeled as oversuppliance and discarded from further analysis. Sentences with the identical structures immediately following each other were scored only once.

- **He don't work well**

Negation (e.g. don't go, doesn't go) was excluded from analysis. The assumption was that negation required a different and more complicated language system than that of adding '-s' morpheme to the base tense in target structure.

- **He <u>have</u> a brother**

The possessive verbs were also not scored in data analysis on the ground that learners may not follow an identical language production process, the binary choice of the addition and the omission of third person's', when they produce these verbs.

3. 9. PROCEDURES

The experiment took roughly five weeks to complete. At the beginning of the experiment, volunteer participants from three intact classes were required to sign a letter of consent and then take an untimed grammaticality judgment test. Based on the responses of the learners to these tests, thirty-nine people were selected as the population of study. The groups were randomly assigned into two experimental (prompt and corrective recast) and control groups. The learners in the experimental groups then participated in treatment 1, two days later in treatment 2, and three days later in treatment 3. Each treatment session took roughly between 30 to 45 minutes of the class time during which they completed communicative tasks and received pre-determined corrective feedback every time they made an incorrect use of target language structure. Learners in the control group did the same communicative tasks without receiving any corrective feedback on the target language structure. The feedback they receive was either on pronunciation or vocabulary. All three groups then took the oral production immediate posttest via interviewing with the researcher and UGJT test 1 day after the instruction. The UGJT took something between 20 to 45 minutes to complete and each oral task lasted almost 10 minutes (5 minutes preparation, 5 minutes interview). Ten days later the same participants took a second set of posttests of oral production and UGJT. The experimental procedure is summarized in the figure below;

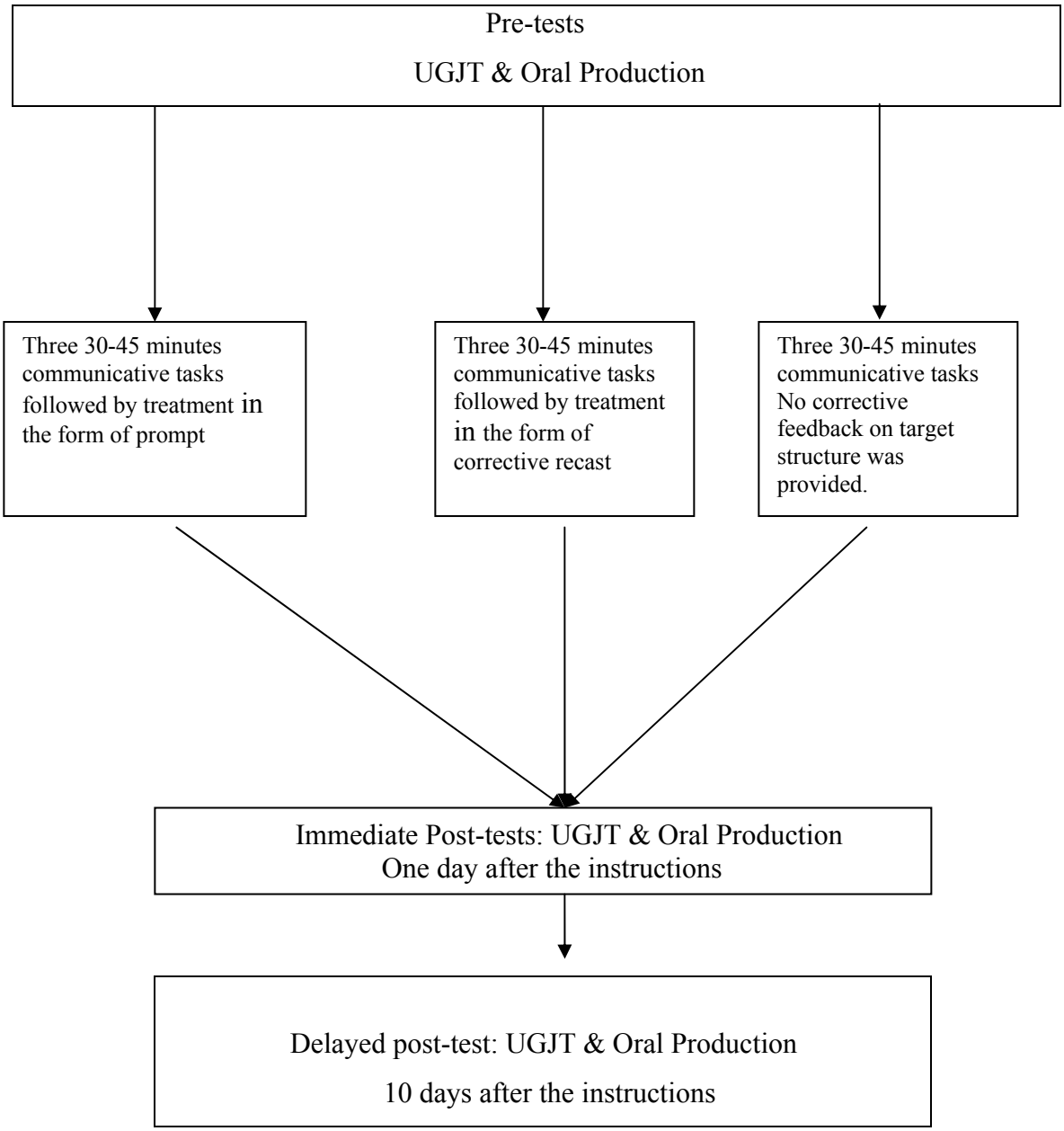


Figure1. Experimental procedure

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION, DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the analysis of the data that was collected in the research. It also describes the result of this analysis with regard to the hypothesis offered for the study. The results of data on the UGJT and the oral production test are analyzed and presented separately since each test was employed to measure different types of learners' knowledge.

4.2. UNTIMED GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT TEST (UGJT)

The data for the UGJT was collected on two different scales; grammatical sentences and ungrammatical sentences. The idea was that ungrammatical items were taken to offer a better measure of explicit knowledge whereas the grammatical sentences were supposed to tap more into implicit knowledge of the learners (Ellis, 2004, 2005, 2006). The data was collected in three different phases; pretest, immediate posttest and delayed post test.

42.1. UGJT Pretest Results

The descriptive statistics of the pretest for the UGJT is presented in Table 1. The horizontal column 'grammatical' represents the mean score of each group on 7 grammatical sentences, 'ungrammatical' column shows the mean score of each group for 7 ungrammatical sentences, and 'total' is the results of groups for the sum of grammatical and ungrammatical sentences (14). As it is shown, the learners scored a mean of 7.83 (out of total 14 questions), which is almost 56 percent of the total grammatical and ungrammatical items. Their score on grammatical sentences reached a mean of 5.39 (out of

7) which comprised 77 percent of the grammatical sentences. They were; however, less successful with correcting the ungrammatical sentences. They scored a mean of 2.44 out of 7, almost 35 percent of the ungrammatical sentences. The data; hence, revealed that despite the considerable amount of instruction, the learners had failed to fully internalize the knowledge of third person '-s' even at an explicit level, itself another evidence of the difficulty of the grammatical structure targeted in the study.

Table1. Descriptive statistics of pretest for the experimental and control groups

Test items	groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Grammatical	Prompt	12	6.00	.953	.275	5.39	6.61	4	7
	Recast	12	4.83	1.403	.405	3.94	5.73	3	7
	Control	12	5.33	1.723	.497	4.24	6.43	1	7
	Total	36	5.39	1.440	.240	4.90	5.88	1	7
Un-grammatical	Prompt	12	2.58	2.275	.657	1.14	4.03	0	6
	Recast	12	2.33	1.303	.376	1.51	3.16	0	4
	control	12	2.42	2.021	.583	1.13	3.70	0	6
	Total	36	2.44	1.858	.310	1.82	3.07	0	6
Total	Prompt	12	8.58	2.193	.633	7.19	9.98	6	12
	Recast	12	7.17	2.038	.588	5.87	8.46	4	11
	control	12	7.75	3.306	.954	5.65	9.85	2	13
	Total	36	7.83	2.569	.428	6.96	8.70	2	13

To ensure that all three groups enjoyed roughly the same level of proficiency in regard to the target language structure at the starting point of the study, a test of one way ANOVA (SPSS 16) was run to compare the means of the three groups. Below is the result of one way ANOVA pretest for the UGJT. As the table shows, there was no significant difference between the three groups on any of the components of UGJT; the grammatical items, F (2,

36) = 2.109, p=.137, the ungrammatical F (2, 36) = .053, p=.948, and the total F (2, 36) = .917, p= .410.

Table 2. The result of ANOVA pretest for the UGJT

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Grammatical	Between Groups	8.222	2	4.111	2.109	.137
	Within Groups	64.333	33	1.949		
	Total	72.556	35			
Un-grammatical	Between Groups	.389	2	.194	.053	.948
	Within Groups	120.500	33	3.652		
	Total	120.889	35			
Total	Between Groups	12.167	2	6.083	.917	.410
	Within Groups	218.833	33	6.631		
	Total	231.000	35			

An important point to consider is that there is a substantial amount of *within group* variances for all three components of the UGJT. In other words, learner's performance in each group varied considerably with regard to the target language structure. This point will be further discussed in the posttests.

The reliability value for the 7 ungrammatical items and the total 14 grammatical and ungrammatical items were calculated. Cornbach Alpha for the total 14 items reached 0.639, which was similar to what Ellis, Loewen and Erlam recorded (0.63) in their studies. Cornbach Alpha for the ungrammatical items recorded as 0.646.The item statistics for the ungrammatical sentences are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Reliability statistics for the ungrammatical items

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.646	7

Table 3. Reliability statistics for the ungrammatical items

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Item1	2.2432	2.800	.353	.611
Item 2	1.9730	2.583	.429	.586
Item 3	2.1351	2.565	.462	.575
Item 4	2.1351	2.565	.462	.575
Item 5	2.1892	3.269	.024	.704
Item 6	2.0811	2.577	.438	.583
Item7	2.3243	2.892	.359	.611

4.2.2. UGJT Immediate Posttest

As stated above, the descriptive statistics showed a considerable amount of within group variances. Although the mean scores of learners on pretest were almost identical, the performance of the learners within each group varied considerably reflecting the diversity of the proficiency of the learners regarding the target language feature. To control for the within group differences, learners' initial performance on the pretest were considered as covariate and a test of ANCOVA was consequently used in both posttests. The covariate was controlled so that the variations between different treatment conditions cannot be due to initial differences between learners. Below (Table 4, 5) is the statistical result of ANCOVA and the related descriptive statistics for the three components of UGJT immediate posttest;

Table 4. Descriptive statistics for the grammatical items of the UGJT immediate posttest.

Dependent Variable:Gr.Post1

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Prompt	6.00	1.477	12
Recast	5.67	1.614	12
Control	5.83	.937	12
Total	5.83	1.342	36

Table 5. Tests of between-subjects effects for the grammatical items immediate posttest

Dependent Variable:Gr.Post1

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	14.656[a]	3	4.885	3.234	.035
Intercept	23.008	1	23.008	15.230	.000
Gr.Pre	13.990	1	13.990	9.260	.005
Groups	.247	2	.124	.082	.922
Error	48.344	32	1.511		
Total	1288.000	36			
Corrected Total	63.000	35			

a. R Squared = .233 (Adjusted R Squared = .161)

Levene's test was also conducted to make sure that the assumption of the equality of error variances between three groups was not violated. The results showed that the groups had homogenous variances. Table 4 shows that the mean score of each group in the immediate posttest for the grammatical sentences of UGJT has not changed much from those of pretest. The mean score of the prompt group remained the same (6) between the two testing conditions, the other two groups showed slight improvements. The recast group increased from 4.83 into 5.67 and the control group mean changed from 5.33 into 5.83. Nonetheless, none of these changes was significant enough to be considered meaningful.

The results of one way ANCOVA (Table 5) shows that the effect of treatment did not reach significance for the grammatical sentences; F (2, 36) = .082, p= .922. The third column of the Table also shows that the covariate is significantly related to our dependant variable; F

(1, 36) = 9.260 p<0.005. This is another evidence to underline the necessity for adjusting the effect of covariate.

A similar procedure was employed for the ungrammatical items in the immediate posttest for the reasons already mentioned above. Levene's test of homogeneity was run for the data and the results revealed that the variance among groups were almost equal. Table 6 exhibits the descriptive statistics for the ungrammatical sentences of the UGJT. As it shows, all three groups have made improvements compared to their performance in the pretest (Table 1). The prompt group performance has increased from 2.58 into 3.83, the recast group from 2.33 into 3.25 and the control group from 2.42 to 3.17.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics for the ungrammatical sentences immediate posttest

Dependent Variable:UNGR.B.post1

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Prompt	3.83	2.517	12
Recast	3.25	1.712	12
Control	3.17	2.368	12
Total	3.42	2.183	36

To detect if the treatment had any effect on the performance of learners on the ungrammatical items of the UGJT, a test of ANCOVA was employed taking the score of learners in the pretest as covariate. Table 7 below shows the result of ANCOVA for the ungrammatical items in the immediate posttest. The third column shows that the effect of pretest was significant i.e. it was necessary to adjust for covariate through using ANCOVA. The last column shows that after adjusting for the pretest score, there was no significant difference among the groups on the immediate posttest; F (2, 36) =0.335, p= 0.718.

Table 7. Tests of between-subjects effects for the ungrammatical items immediate posttest

Dependent Variable:UNGR.B.post1

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	80.180[a]	3	26.727	9.879	.000
Intercept	27.645	1	27.645	10.219	.003
UNGR. Pre	77.013	1	77.013	28.467	.000
Groups	1.812	2	.906	.335	.718
Error	86.570	32	2.705		
Total	587.000	36			
Corrected Total	166.750	35			

a. R Squared = .481 (Adjusted R Squared = .432)

Overall the effect of treatment was not significant for any parts of the UGJT in the immediate posttest. Learners' performance on the immediate posttest on any parts of UGJT (grammatical, ungrammatical and total) did not improve to a significant level. We could, hence, conclude that both types of corrective feedback (prompt and corrective recast) had no immediate effect (at least) on the explicit knowledge of language learners[15].

4.2.3. UGJT Delayed Posttest

A similar procedure described above in the immediate posttest was also employed in the delayed posttest to tap the performance of learners for the two parts of UGJT. Below are the results of the descriptive statistics for the grammatical sentences of UGJT.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics for the grammatical items delayed posttest

Dependent Variable:Gr.post2

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Prompt	6.50	1.000	12

[15] . I used the term explicit knowledge rather referring to both types of knowledge because I hold that, due to the administration procedures, the ungrammatical components of GJT provide more accurate results about the explicit knowledge of learners than grammatical items do about implicit knowledge. This issue will be further discussed in the next chapter.

Recast	5.58	1.730	12
Control	5.75	1.288	12
Total	5.94	1.393	36

A comparison between Table 4 and Table 8 shows that there was not much difference between the mean score of each participating group on the grammatical sentences of UGJT in the immediate and delayed posttest. The prompt group showed a slight improvement as the mean score of the subjects in this group changed from 6 to 6.5. The difference between the mean scores of the corrective recast and the control group between two posttests was too little and almost remained the same. Levene's test of homogeneity of variance also showed that in the delayed posttest the difference of error variance of three groups remained insignificant. To find out if the corrective feedback used had any effect on the performance of learners on the ungrammatical items of the UGJT, a test of ANCOVA was once again run taking learners pretest scores as covariate. Below is the result of ANCOVA in delayed posttest for the grammatical sentences of the UGJT.

Table 9. Tests of between-subjects effects for the grammatical items delayed posttest

Dependent Variable:Gr.post2

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	26.054[a]	3	8.685	6.643	.001
Intercept	17.732	1	17.732	13.564	.001
Gr. Pre	20.332	1	20.332	15.552	.000
Groups	.833	2	.417	.319	.729
Error	41.835	32	1.307		
Total	1340.000	36			
Corrected Total	67.889	35			

a. R Squared = .384 (Adjusted R Squared = .326)

Table 9 shows that after adjusting for the effect of covariate the difference between the mean scores of the study groups did not reach significance; F (2, 36) =0.319, p=729. In other words, no meaningful difference was spotted for different groups in the delayed posttest. The instructional intervention turned out to have no effect on the performance of learners on the grammatical items of UGJT in the delayed posttest.

Similar steps were also taken for the data gathered from the learners' response on the ungrammatical items in the delayed posttest. Table 10 shows the descriptive statistics for the ungrammatical items in the delayed posttest. A comparison between the posttest and pretest results (Tables 6 and 10) shows an improvement in the mean score of the experimental groups with the prompt group revealing the highest amount of progress (its mean score improved from 3.83 to 4.58 between two posttest) and the recast group coming next (its mean changed from 3.25 in the first posttest to 3.58 in the second). The control group made no improvement and its mean score even reduced a little.

Table 10. Descriptive statistics for the ungrammatical items delayed posttest

Dependent Variable:UNGR.B.post2

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1	4.58	1.975	12
2	3.58	1.881	12
3	3.00	2.923	12
Total	3.72	2.337	36

To find out if the changes in the mean score of three groups were statistically meaningful, a test of ANCOVA was once more run among the scores of three groups. The results showed that the performance of learners on the ungrammatical sentences in the delayed posttest did not display any significant among group differences. As Table 11 shows, after adjusting for the covariate, the difference among the mean scores of the three groups did not reach significant level, F (2, 36) =179, p=0.179. Levene's test also did not detect any violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variance among the groups.

Table 11. Tests of between-subjects effects for the ungrammatical items delayed posttest.

Dependent Variable:UNGR.B.post2

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	77.602[a]	3	25.867	7.285	.001
Intercept	49.950	1	49.950	14.068	.001
UNGR.Pre	62.213	1	62.213	17.522	.000
groups	12.894	2	6.447	1.816	.179
Error	113.620	32	3.551		
Total	690.000	36			
Corrected Total	191.222	35			

a. R Squared = .406 (Adjusted R Squared = .350)

Overall the implementation of four analysis of covariance (ANCOVAS) revealed no group differences in the immediate posttest for the grammatical items F (2, 36) = .082, p= .922, or the ungrammatical items; F (2, 32) = .335, p= .718. Additionally there was no significant difference between the groups in the delayed posttest for both grammatical items F (2, 32) =.319, p=.729 and ungrammatical items F (2, 32) =1.816, p=.179

Table 12 below summarizes the descriptive statistics of the pretest, immediate posttest and delayed posttest of three study groups for the UGJT. It shows a moderate level of accuracy for the target language structure on the pretest, ranging between 51 to 61 percent for the experimental groups. The accuracy generally increased over the next two posttests. It reached an average of 66.5 percent in the first pretest and 72 percent in the second for the experimental groups.

Table12. The summary of descriptive statistics for the grammatical judgment tests

	Pretest		Immediate posttest		Delayed posttest	
Groups	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Prompt						

Grammatical	.857	.953	.857	1.477	.928	1.000
Ungrammatical	.368	2.275	.547	2.517	.654	1.975
Total	.612	2.193	.702	3.407	.791	2.575
Recast						
Grammatical	.690	1.403	.810	1.614	.797	1.730
Ungrammatical	.332	1.303	.464	1.712	.511	1.881
Total	.512	2.038	.637	2.644	.655	2.855
Control						
Grammatical	.761	1.723	.832	.937	.821	1.288
Ungrammatical	.345	2.021	.452	2.368	.428	2.923
Total	.553	3.306	.642	2.860	.625	3.671

Test- retest reliability was calculated for the ungrammatical and the total items for the control group only (N=12). The results of pretest and immediate posttest, and the pretest and the delayed posttest for the ungrammatical items are presented in Table 13 and 14 below. The correlation was positively significant in both cases. Pearson's r for the ungrammatical items in the pretest and the immediate posttest were 0.820, $p<0.01$ and in the pretest and the delayed posttest was 0.816, $p<0.01$. A positively significant correlation was also recorded for the pretest and the immediate posttest and the pretest and the delayed posttest of the total items (Table 15, 16). Pearson's r reached 0.798, $p<0.01$ for the pretest and the immediate posttest and was 0.728, $p<0.01$ for the pretest and the delayed posttest.

Table 13. Correlations between the pretest and the immediate posttest for the ungrammatical items

		Ungrammatical pre	Ungrammatical Post1
Ungrammatical pre	Pearson Correlation	1	.820**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	12	12
Ungrammatical post1	Pearson Correlation	.820**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	12	12

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 14. Correlations between the pretest and the delayed posttest for the ungrammatical items

		Ungrammatical pre	Ungrammatical post2
Ungrammatical pre	Pearson Correlation	1	.816**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001

	N	12	12
Ungrammatical post2	Pearson Correlation	.816**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	12	12

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 15. Correlations between the pretest and the immediate posttest, total items

		Total pre	Total post1
Total pre	Pearson Correlation	1	.798**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	12	12
Total post1	Pearson Correlation	.798**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	12	12

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 16. Correlations between the pretest and the delayed posttest total items

		Total pre	Total post2
Total pre	Pearson Correlation	1	.728**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007
	N	12	12
Total post2	Pearson Correlation	.728**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	
	N	12	12

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 1 and 2 below display the results of the grammatical and the ungrammatical items of the UGJT. Figure 1 shows that the group performance on the grammatical items was almost at the ceiling level for all three participating groups at the outset of the experiment and did not change much in the first and second posttest. Figure2 shows that three participating groups revealed a considerable amount of uniformity at the beginning of the study. The immediate and delayed posttest results show some improvements in the mean score of experimental groups over the control group with the prompt group performing better than both recast and control group. Additionally, the mean scores of the experimental groups

became exceedingly better as the time passed by; though, the difference among the groups never reached a significant level in any of the posttests.

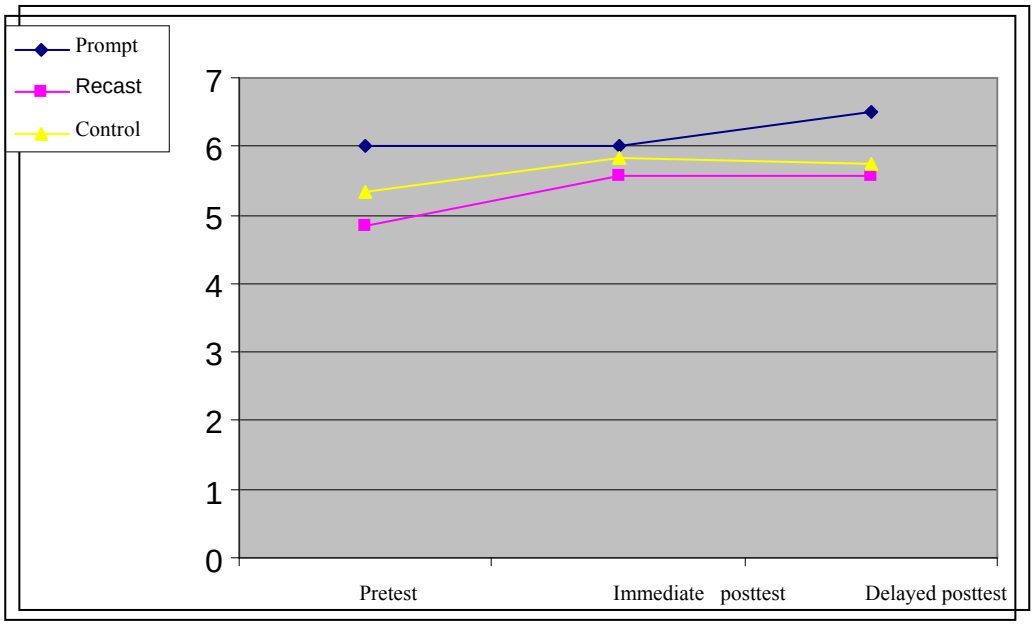


Figure1. The UGJT results for the grammatical items.

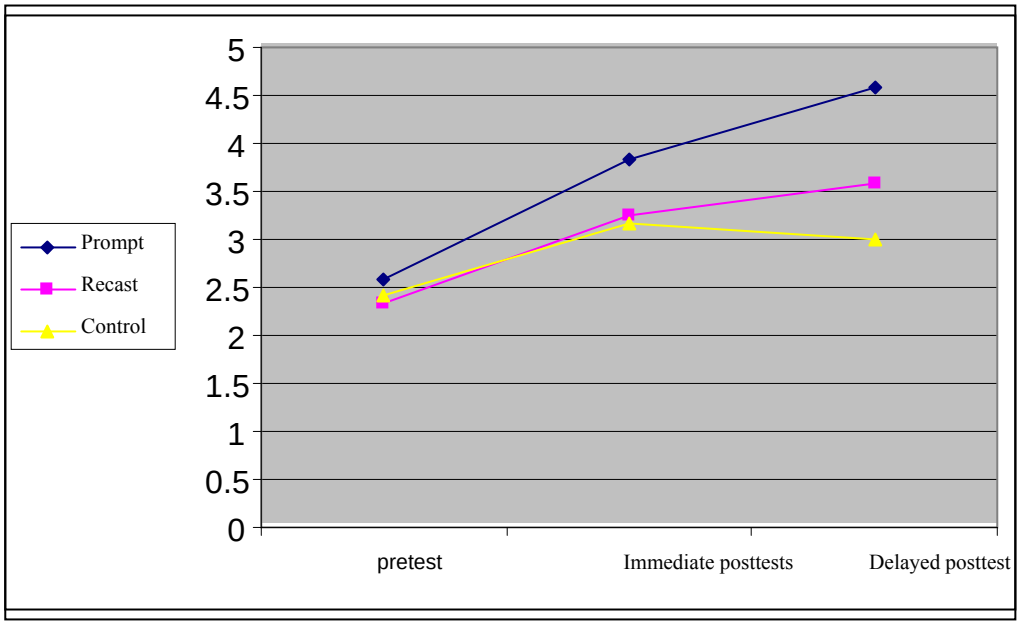


Figure2. The UGJT results for the ungrammatical items

4.3. ORAL PRODUCTION TASKS

As already mentioned in methodology chapter, oral narration tasks were employed to tap the learners' oral production measures. Learners performance in three different groups was collected and compared in three different testing sessions; pretest, immediate and delayed posttests. Following Muranoi (2000) scoring rubric, learners' production of third person '-s' first scored for the correct use in obligatory contexts. This score then became the numerator of a ratio whose denominator was the sum of the number of obligatory contexts and the number of nonobligatory contexts in which third person '-s' were supplied inappropriately.

4.3.1 Oral production pretest results

Table 17 shows the descriptive statistics for three groups on the oral production tests. The highest mean score was recorded for the control group with an average mean score of 54.27, second was the prompt group with 44.59 and third came the corrective recast group with 37.37. A test of ANOVA was run to find out if the differences between the mean scores of the three groups were meaningful; in other words, if the three groups were pedagogically comparable at the outset. The results (Table 18) show no significant difference among the study groups on the oral measures of target language structure, $F(2, 31) = .744$, $p = .484$. The last two columns in Table 18 show that the range of scores varied considerably for all three participating groups. It also reveals that, not unlike the pretest results of the UGJT, the learners' performance on the oral measures varied considerably in each study group. This point is taken care of in the immediate and delayed posttests.

Table 17. Descriptive statistic of the oral narration pretest

Pre

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Prompt	10	44.5950	32.64786	10.32416	21.2401	67.9499	.00	100.00
Recast	11	37.3727	34.73051	10.47164	14.0405	60.7050	.00	100.00
Control	10	54.2750	27.03487	8.54918	34.9354	73.6146	.00	88.90
Total	31	45.1548	31.48230	5.65439	33.6070	56.7026	.00	100.00

Table 18. ANOVA for the oral narration pretest

Pre

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1501.081	2	750.541	.744	.484
Within Groups	28232.980	28	1008.321		
Total	29734.062	30			

4.3.2. Oral Production Immediate Posttest

Table 19 shows the descriptive statistics of the immediate posttests on the oral measures. It is evident that the mean score of both experimental groups have passed that of the control group in the immediate posttest with the explicit recast group showing better performance over the other two groups. A comparison between the performance of the experimental groups in the pretest and the first posttest shows that the mean score of the prompt group displays a 35.29% amount of increase. Likewise, the recast group also recorded a 72% mean increase in the oral narration in the first posttest compared to their pretest scores. Somewhat expectedly, the score of the control group did not change considerably between the two tests though. It only exhibited a 5% decrease.

Table 19. Descriptive statistics for the oral narration immediate posttest

Dependent Variable:post1

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Prompt	60.3389	27.66518	9
Corrective recast	64.3273	22.48529	11
Control	51.2900	26.56202	10
Total	58.7850	25.22315	30

To find out if the effect of instructional intervention was large enough to be significant, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) using the pretest as covariate was employed. The differences among the mean scores of groups were considered significant when $p \leq 0.05$. Below are the descriptive statistics and ANCOVA results of the immediate posttest (Table 20).

Table 20. Tests of between-subjects effects for the oral narration immediate posttest

Dependent Variable:post1

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	9884.613[a]	3	3294.871	10.001	.000
Intercept	9565.831	1	9565.831	29.037	.000
Pre	8963.247	1	8963.247	27.208	.000
Group	2561.376	2	1280.688	3.887	.033
Error	8565.402	26	329.439		
Total	122120.302	30			
Corrected Total	18450.016	29			

a. R Squared = .536 (Adjusted R Squared = .482)

As it can be seen, the results of ANCOVA show a significant among group differences in the immediate posttest; $F(2, 30) = 3.887$, $p=.033$. As it is the case with all parametric tests,

the homogeneity of group and the normality of the distribution of data are prerequisite. In other words, the use of ANCOVA is justified after it is proved that the data is sampled from a normal distribution and their variances across groups are equal. Leven's and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests were used respectively to find out if the variance between the groups was homogeneous and if the data was normally distributed. Below are the results of these two tests.

Table 21. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Pre	post1	post2
N		31	31	32
Normal Parameters[a]	Mean	45.1548	58.0984	65.6016
	Std. Deviation	3.14823E1	2.50921E1	2.70046E1
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.105	.163	.198
	Positive	.105	.090	.146
	Negative	-.076	-.163	-.198
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.583	.910	1.117
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.886	.379	.165

a. Test distribution is Normal.

Table 22. Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]

Dependent Variable:post1

F	df1	df2	Sig.
2.040	2	27	.150

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + pre + group

The results of Levene's test of homogeneity and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test show that the assumption of the homogeneity of variance and normality of distribution are not violated.

A pairwise comparison for the oral narration posttest was run for the data. As Table 23 reveals, the results show that corrective recast group significantly outperformed the control

group. No statistically significant differences were observed between the prompt and the control group or the prompt and the corrective recast group.

Table 23. Pairwise comparisons

Dependent Variable:post1

(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.[a]	95% Confidence Interval for Difference[a]	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
prompt	recast	-9.325	8.222	.267	-26.225	7.575
	control	13.309	8.379	.124	-3.916	30.533
recast	prompt	9.325	8.222	.267	-7.575	26.225
	control	22.634*	8.141	.010	5.899	39.368
control	prompt	-13.309	8.379	.124	-30.533	3.916
	recast	-22.634*	8.141	.010	-39.368	-5.899

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

4.3.3. Oral production Delayed Posttest

Similar procedure was also employed to calculate and analyze the performance of the learners on the oral production delayed posttests. Table 24 below reveals the results of the descriptive statistics of the three groups in the delayed posttest oral measures. A comparison between the participants scores on the immediate and delayed posttests (Table 19 and 24) shows that both experimental groups have maintained their ascending tend in the delayed posttest of the oral narration. The mean score of the prompt and the corrective recast groups increased 4% and 21% respectively. The score of the control group also increased some 18%. Below are the descriptive statistics for the delayed posttests.

Table 24. Descriptive statistics for the oral narration delayed posttest

Dependent Variable:post2

group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
prompt	63.2900	27.13279	10
recast	77.8773	12.60296	11
control	60.9700	30.11748	10
Total	67.7177	24.60647	31

To ensure that group differences are statistically significant, a test of ANCOVA (analysis of covariance) was run with the data adjusting for the pretest as covariant. Results were considered significant at $p \leq .05$. Below is the result of ANCOVA for the oral narration delayed posttests.

Table 25. Tests of between-subjects effects for the delayed posttest oral narration

Dependent Variable:post2

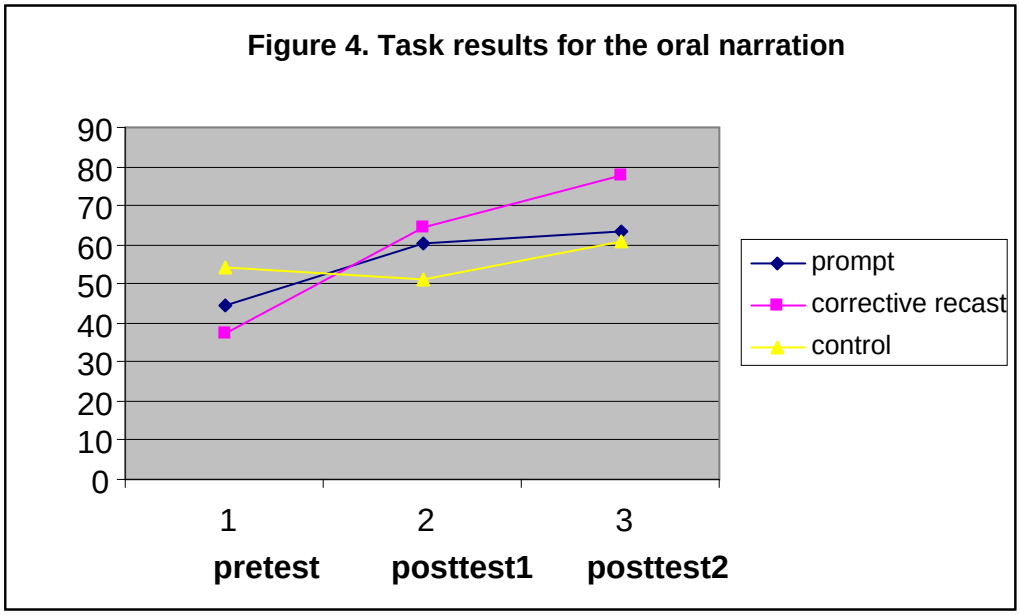
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	5168.083[a]	3	1722.694	3.579	.027
Intercept	25328.869	1	25328.869	52.621	.000
Pre	3381.337	1	3381.337	7.025	.013
Group	2845.443	2	1422.722	2.956	.069
Error	12996.265	27	481.343		
Total	160320.818	31			
Corrected Total	18164.348	30			

a. R Squared = .285 (Adjusted R Squared = .205)

As the results of analysis in the delayed posttest reveals, the mean difference between the participating groups only tended for significance F=2.956 p=.069. The superior performance of the recast group over the control group in the immediate posttest was not carried over to delayed posttest[16].

[16] . As it was mentioned in the methodology section, only the score of the participants who created at least four obligatory occasions for the use of target language was considered for the analysis. The analysis of scores of all participants (regardless of the number of obligatory occasion created) showed a closer approach to significance for the delayed posttest of the oral narration F=3.17 p=.057.

Figure 4 below shows a comparison between the performance of the three participating groups in the pretest, immediate posttest and delayed posttest. As it reveals, the corrective recast group exhibits a more steady line of improvement than other groups. The mean score of the participants of this group increased constantly as the time passed by. The prompt group also reveals some degree of increase in their mean score in the immediate posttest. However, the rising trend in the performance of this group reduced considerably in the delayed posttest making the difference between the performance of this group and control group less noticeable.



It is also noticeable that at the outset the control group had an advantage over the experiment groups on the oral measures, but as the figures shows, both experimental groups managed to catch up to their counterparts in the comparison group and overtook them in the immediate posttest. The difference among the mean scores of the experimental and control group was mostly reflected in the superior performance of corrective recast group in the immediate posttest. The difference between this group and the control group in the delayed posttest was not large enough to create any meaningful among group differences. Table 29 below summarizes the descriptive statistics of the pretest, the

immediate posttest and the delayed posttest for the three study groups on the oral production tasks.

Table29. The summary of descriptive statistics for the oral production tasks

	Pretest		Immediate posttest		Delayed posttest	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Prompt	44.59	32.67	60.33	27.66	63.29	27.13
Recast	37.37	34.73	64.32	22.48	77.87	12.60
Control	54.27	27.03	51.29	26.56	60.97	30.11
Total	45.15	31.48	58.78	25.22	67.71	24.60

4.4. THE SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

The summary of the results with regard to research questions is as follows;

The first research question asked what kind of corrective feedback (prompt or recast) was more effective in helping language learners develop their explicit knowledge of third person '-s'. Given that language learners response on the ungrammatical sentences of the UGJT relatively represents their use of explicit knowledge (Ellis, 2005, 2006), and the fact that in the delayed and immediate posttests the mean differences among the participant groups on the ungrammatical sentences did not reach a significant level, the answer to the first research questions is that as far as the explicit knowledge of the learners is concerned corrective feedback had no significant effect on the learning of the target language structure.

The second research questions asked if there was any significant difference between the two experimental groups (the prompt and the corrective recast) in terms of their performance in language tests that likely reflect the participants' implicit knowledge. The difference between the mean score of the corrective recast group and the control group

reached significance in the immediate posttest for the oral narration. There was also a trend for significance in the delayed posttests on the oral measures. This implies that, at least in a short run, corrective recast is more effective than prompt to bring about change in the implicit knowledge of the learners regarding the target language structure.

The last research question asked if the effect of corrective feedback was permanent or transient. The answer to this question is that the effect is probably a transient one. As the results of data analysis showed, the positive effect of the treatment evident in the oral measures in the immediate posttest reduced in the delayed posttest that was administered 10 days later. However, the fact that there was a tendency for significance in the delayed posttest of the oral narration and the fact that the mean score of the explicit recast group kept its upward trends between the two posttests imply that these results should be handled with care. Table 30 summarizes the main findings of the study in both the UGJT test and the oral production test.

Table30. Summary of statistical differences for oral production and GJT, immediate and delayed posttest

Test	Immediate posttest	Delayed posttest
Grammaticality judgment		
Grammatical	No significant difference	No significant difference
Ungrammatical	No significant difference	No significant difference
Oral narration	Corrective recast> control	Trend for significance

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the major findings of the study are discussed with regard to the research questions and the findings of previous studies. It is attempted to explain why the results came out the way they did. The possible limitations that the study suffered from and some suggestions for the future research are also offered in the end.

5.2. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGINGS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

The first research question asks what kind of corrective feedback (prompt and corrective recast) affects EFL learners restructuring of their explicit knowledge of the third person '-s'. To find the answer to this question, learners' performance on the ungrammatical items of the grammaticality judgment test for three testing stages was compared. The result showed that there was no significant mean difference among the three participating groups. In other words, corrective feedback, regardless of type, had no meaningful effect on the performance of language learners on the language test that relatively reflects the use of explicit knowledge. Before I move to account for the findings of the learners' performance on UGJT, I need to make two important points about the seemingly dissimilar performance of learners' on grammatical and ungrammatical items of this test, and the reason for choosing the ungrammatical sentences to account for the implicit knowledge of learners.

As the result of data analysis revealed, at pretest stage learners performed better on grammatical items than ungrammatical items of UGJT. The three groups reached an average mean score of 77% for the grammatical items while their average score for ungrammatical items was only 35%. Since according to Ellis (2005) grammatical and ungrammatical items of GJT measure two different types of knowledge_ that grammatical

items mostly measure the implicit knowledge and ungrammatical items explicit knowledge_ how could we possibly account for this seemingly high level of implicit and low level of explicit knowledge of the learners. After all, our findings contradict those of Ellis et al. (2006) where learners scored higher on both parts of UGJT and their performance on ungrammatical items was better than on grammatical items.

One reason for the comparatively poor performance of our learners on ungrammatical items was the scoring system employed in the present research. As already mentioned in the methodology part, an additional step was included into scoring procedure in that learners were required to not only point out the ungrammaticality of incorrect sentences but also to correct them.. While in other grammaticality judgments tests the sole indication of the ungrammaticality of incorrect sentences was enough to grant a score, here the learners were asked to take an additional step and rectify the deviant part as well. If, for instance, learners label a sentence like "Our country need to spend more money on sports" as ungrammatical but failed to correct it or changed it into, for instance, "Our country need *spending* more money on sports" no score would be given to them. Taking the additional step made it highly unlikely that learners were scored for something other than the target structure. Ellis et al. (2006); however, failed to include the correction part hence the reason for higher score of participants in the ungrammatical parts of their research.

As the analysis of data showed, the results of learners' performance on the grammatical items of UGJT did not reach significance in both immediate posttests and delay posttest. Does this mean that provided feedback had no effect on developing learners' implicit knowledge in different experimental groups? After all, Ellis argued that these sentences measure more of implicit knowledge than explicit knowledge of the learners.

To answer this question, I intend to make two different points; the first one is statistical and the second is theoretical. One reason for the ineffectiveness of treatment on learners' performance on grammatical items was their near- perfect starting score at their pretest stage. As Table 12 showed, at the beginning of the study learners' performance on the

grammatical items was at the ceiling level. Learners in the three participating group scored an average score of 77 % in pretest. The prompt group, recast group and control group scored 85%, 69% and 76% of all grammatical items respectively. It is this ceiling level of performance at the initial stage of experiment that was partially responsible for the insignificance among group differences in immediate and delayed posttests. After all, the three participating group scores were close to perfect before the experiment had started. That is why even when the score of prompt group increased to 93% in delayed posttest no significant difference was recorded between the three groups. Of course, the other two groups, recast and control group, also made improvements, but if the score of control group had remained the same as pretest, the difference between groups would not have reached the significance level either.

The second important point concerns the degree to which learners' performance on grammatical items reflects their use of implicit knowledge. As Ellis (2004, 2005) has argued, the availability of time is one of the key factors to differentiate between the use of implicit and explicit knowledge. It is assumed that implicit knowledge is accessible through automatic processing and reflects natural language use where no monitoring time is available or used (Ellis, 2004). The application of time pressure is more conducive to the use of implicit knowledge and the accessibility of it could give way to the exploitation of explicit knowledge.

Given the fact that the type of test used in this study was an untimed one, and learners could answer the questions at their own pace, I assume learners could have used their time to access both knowledge types while answering the grammatical items. I hold that more time pressured language tests, similar to the one employed in the study to test oral production of learners, would provide a more accurate measure of the learners' use of implicit knowledge than the grammatical items of GJT.

The ungrammatical items of UGJT, on the other hand, seemed to offer a reliable measure of the explicit knowledge of test takers as this type of knowledge required no time

restriction. As the results of data analysis for ungrammatical items revealed, no significant change was detected for both experimental groups in immediate or delayed posttests. Neither of feedback types used in the study had significant effect on the explicit knowledge of the participating groups about target language feature. These findings also echoed Ellis, Leowen and Erlam (2006) results in which they found corrective feedback had no noticeable effect on the explicit knowledge of the learners.

The outcome is, of course, not unexpected. The subjects of the study had been at Prep school for more than nine months and had already had a history of receiving ample instruction in simple present tense. Their below-expectation performance on the UGJT may not lie as much in knowing a new tense type, as in differentiating simple present tense from other tenses, for example, present continuous. In other words, they usually failed to realize the occasions where the simple present should/not be used. In this sense, the role of corrective feedback on explicit knowledge was more consolidating than introductory.

Despite the lack of significant performance of experimental groups in UGJT, the upward trend in the mean score of these groups for the ungrammatical items is noteworthy. In fact, the performance of both experimental groups improved from the pretest to immediate posttest and from immediate posttest to delayed posttest. As Table 12 reveals, the mean score of prompt group in the pretest, for example, was roughly 37 % and this number increased to almost 55 % in the immediate posttest and some 65% in the delayed posttest. The recast group also displayed similar trend of gain in the mean score for the ungrammatical items, though a little less conspicuous than the prompt group. Although the difference between the mean score of the three groups never reached a significant level, one wonders what a new set of results would look like if a third posttest had been held some 10 days later.

In sum, the additions of correction part to the UGJT made the results of participants in this study appear different from those of previous studies such as Ellis et al. (2006). The difference was mostly, but not exclusively, reflected in the ungrammatical items of UGJT

where the correction was required. I also argued that, due to the lack of time restriction for the implementation of the test, the performance of learners on the ungrammatical items could offer a better measure of their explicit knowledge than their performance on the grammatical items offers about their implicit knowledge. Furthermore, the fact that learners' performance on the grammatical items at the pretest stage was at the ceiling level could be partially responsible for the ineffectiveness of both treatments and insignificant among-group differences both in immediate and delayed posttests. The fact that learners performance on ungrammatical items did not improve to a significant level shows that corrective feedback is not much effective with regard to explicit knowledge of the learners, though the ascending trend for ungrammatical items is also suggestive that a more prolonged treatment might bring about different results.

5.3. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

The second research question asks what kind of corrective feedback affects EFL learners restructuring of their implicit knowledge of third person '-s'? In other word, if one feedback type is more effective than the other to help learners perform better on language tests that (relatively) measure their implicit knowledge of third person '-s'. As the result of data analysis showed the performance of language learners on the oral task i.e. oral narration reached significance in immediate posttest[17]. Moreover the effect of instructional intervention was mostly reflected in superior performance of corrective recast group. The difference between the mean accuracy scores of prompt group and other groups never

[17] . It might be argued that the (short) preparation time given before the telling of stories in testing sessions might have reduced the spontaneous nature of the task, and therefore, the oral test runs the risk of tapping a construct other than implicit knowledge of the participants. However, there are several reasons to believe that this could not be the case. First, the language of the story was written in first person while the learners were asked to narrate them in third person, and learners were not aware of the shift in narration until 5 minute preparation time ran out. This was done with the primary objective of reducing the role of rote memorization. Second, the retelling of the story was conducted in the interview manner in which researchers stopped language learners from time to time and asked detailed questions about the story. The question-answer nature of the task made the story telling more spontaneous and reduced the rote retelling of the story. Third, story telling was also used as a measure of implicit knowledge in other studies as well. Erlam (2006), for instance, used story telling as a criterion reference against which an oral imitation test, a language test that aspires to measure the implicit knowledge, was validated.

reached significance in both immediate and delayed posttest. How could we account for the short run efficiency of recast over prompt in our study? After all, the results of recent studies where recast was compared with prompt proved the opposite (see Lyster, 2004; Ellis et al., 2006; Ammar and Spada, 2006, Ammar 2008).

The different ways through which recast is operationalized may affect the perception of learners of the corrective purpose that it carries, and the likelihood that the desired outcome is achieved. It is highly unlikely that recast would entail any language development if it is employed in a way that language learners could not notice its corrective force. And as Lyster adequately explained, there are various reasons to believe that language learners may fail to realize the corrective purpose of recast.

For one thing, teachers usually do not use recast for the sole purpose of error correction. At times, recast is used by teacher to fulfill a dual function of asking or providing additional information as well as offering correction. Consider the following examples;

(1) L: This one is a cat (using the wrong pronunciation for cat /ket/)
T: Yes, this one is a cat. Next one …. (pronunciation is corrected /kæt/)

(2)L: everybody do this.
T: Not everybody does this.

In 1 the recast has a dual role of making correction and providing confirmation. In 2 the recast gives the additional information besides being corrective (_some people don't do that_). Lyster (ibid) arguing on the similar base concludes that "the formal properties entailed in the corrective reformulation of recast may easily be overridden by their functional properties in meaning oriented classroom".

Another pitfall that makes perception of the intention behind the use of recast by the language learners more confounded is that non-corrective repetition is used with almost the same proportion and follows the same functional pattern as recast; they are both used in declarative, integrative, original length or shorten forms (Lyster, 1998). They are also both

used to maintain the floor and have learners continue the topic. No wonder learners have difficulty differentiating one from the other (Lyster, 1998).

Even if language learners manage to perceive teachers' feedback as corrective, they may not be able to decide what language area is addressed by the instructors. The inability of learners to detect their error types is more likely to occur with regard to grammar rather than other categories of errors say vocabulary, for instance. In their study about the effect of interactional feedback, Mackey, Gass and McDonough (2000) found that while language learners were relatively accurate with perceiving their lexical, phonological and semantic errors, they were less likely to do so with morphosyntactical errors. Since most of the feedback on morphosyntactic errors was provided through recast, it could be concluded that language learners have difficulties in perceiving the exact language areas that provided recasts target at.

So far I have argued that in the classroom settings recast is not solely used for the corrective purposes, and that the way it is used is similar to other non-corrective repetition moves. It is highly unlikely that learners could always manage to assign a corrective value to the recast. Instead, they might perceive it as comments on the content or rephrasing of what they have already said (Long, 1996). Even if they notice that teachers' feedback is corrective, they may not be able to realize where the error actually happened. This, at times, might be due to the ambiguous discourse that teachers use in the classroom, i.e. they use the corrective recast and non-corrective repetition with the same proportion and structure, or they use recast to fulfill functions besides providing negative evidence.

The problem could also be viewed from a cognitive perspective as well. The limited attentional resources of language learners make it difficult for them to simultaneously pay attention to both form and meaning. Once language learners channel their whole attention to meaning, it becomes difficult for them to use language accurately or become cognizant of the purpose of the teachers' correction. When the focus of the speaker is primarily on the

meaning, the provided corrective feedback might also be mistakenly assigned to the same area, i.e. semantic rather than syntax.

To avoid the inherent ambiguity of recast in language classes, what is needed is to make the corrective force of it more noticeable to the learners so that they could easily separate it from other purposes that recast and non-corrective repetition may serve in the classroom. And this is exactly what happened in the recast type we employed in our study. The repetition of erroneous utterances with super segmental manipulation over verbs sent a clear signal to the language learners that they had made errors. It also indicated where the error was located. Furthermore, the likelihood that learners would interpret the provided correction as teacher comment on the content of message, a semantic feedback, was also eliminated as the instructor immediately supplied the needed exemplar with falling intonation and emphatic stress over the verb again. Learners hence managed to map their deviant structure with that of teacher's. The recast turned out to be effective[18].

A point of caution is in order. If the perception of language learners is what matters in the long term, then the type of task employed and the way it is actualized could also play a key role. The more communicative a task is and the more language learners' minds are involved in the content of the message, the more corrective force the feedback needs to carry so that it could provide the required time out for learners to divert their focus from meaning into form. Oliver and Mackey (2003), for instance, found that the recast would lead into more modified learners output in the explicit language context than in communicative context. In other words, in an explicit context learners are more likely to realize that the recast used is directed at language form rather than language message.

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[18] . As we already explained, the treatment of recast had two stages; the erroneous parts of learners' utterance were repeated and the required exemplars were provided right after. Since the research also intended to compare the teacher correction with student generated one, there was no or very little time interval between two phases. Judging from the only recording of recast group, it is clear that in some cases the repetition ignited the initiation of some peer corrections, but their voices were drown out by the teacher's.
Unfortunately of three recordings of recast group, only one remained safe. The others somehow failed to function. On the top of this, the useable one was the treatment which lasted the shortest (30 min.) and created the least amount of target structure use. 11 erroneous uses of target language structure were recorded, in 5 of which the existence of the initiation of some kind of peer correction was spotted. As I indicated above, such peer correction did not last long since the teacher immediately reformulated and produced the right structure.

The fact that the corrective nature of recast is better understood in less communicative contexts, of course, is not a prescription for the conversion of a communicative task into a purely structural one. A time out from a meaning loaded interaction to a temporary form focused activity could be conducted in a professional manner so that learners could sustain a healthy balance between meaning and form and make a better use of their knowledge about language structure while they are communicating for meaning. This is what I believe was successfully done in our study.

To round up, the explicitly corrective manner by which the recast was operationalized in the study fulfilled different functions and thereby proved effective in the immediate posttest:

- It overtly signaled to language learners that an error had occurred.
- It located the place where the error had occurred,
- It made the nature of the error (morphological) clear
- It showed how correction could be made and thereby facilitated a cognitive comparison between their interlanguage utterance and target-like form.
- It implied that the correct use of target language structure is as important as the message itself.

How could we account for the so called below expectation performance of learners in prompt group? After all these findings undermine the recent trends in SLA in which argue for a discovery based approach to error correction where teachers procrastinate the provision of ready made replies and make learners draw upon what they already know and respond more actively to their mistakes (Lyster, 1998).

Several reasons could be offered to account for the relatively weak performance of prompt group. First of all, the analysis the classroom discourse obtained from the study shows that prompt, at least the way it was operationalized in this study, was not much interactional, and therefore, was not always unambiguous. Repeating language learners' sentences with a rising intonation at the place where the mistake occurred may be an effective strategy to

make learners realize that something has gone wrong with their production. Yet, when learners' attention is primarily on the meaning, they may have problems with correct perception of the area that feedback is directed at, especially when their errors are morphosyntactic. Learners might simply consider teachers' feedback on these types of errors as a response to the content of the message rather than language form. This has already been reported with (implicit) recast in Macky et al. (2000) study. Similar occasions also occurred in our study with prompt group. Below are two examples of when such misperceptions occurred.

(3) L. She ignore her husband
T. She **ignore**?> , She **ignore>**?
L. Yes, Like our position in Turkey, married people in Turkey, sir.

(4) T. What does she say about money?
S. She say money is good.
T. She **say**? > she….?
S. She said money is good.

In 3, the student has taken teacher's repetition as a response to the content of the text. While teacher's intention of using rising intonation was to draw learners' attention to the structural problem, the student perceived it as teachers' disagreement with the idea. The student response shows that she kept arguing that the word 'ignoring' is the right choice, that ignoring of spouse is something common even in Turkey. In 4, learner is successful to realize that teacher's feedback is grammatical yet again fails to assign the right value to it and confuses it with the wrong tense choice i.e. simple past instead of simple present. Cases like this add a new layer to Chaudron (1988, p.145) claim that repetition as a corrective feedback could produce ambiguity[19]. It also offers some justifications for placing repetition in the implicit CF category by Long (1996)[20] .

[19] . Chaudron (1988) found that language learner have problem with assigning the right value to repetition since they find it difficult whether the provided feedback was negative evidence, corrective in nature, or was positive and used to express understanding and expressing the agreement with the listeners.

[20] For Long recast, clarification request, repetition and paralinguistic signs such as gesture and facial expression are considered as implicit corrective feedback.

The second argument is based upon the degree to which prompt turned out to be as a self discovery process. Though repetition and the elicitation moves were conducted with the primary goal of making learners draw upon their resources and do self correction, this was not usually the case, and for the most part it resulted in peer correction instead. In the third treatment sessions of prompt group, for example, overall 51 cases of the use of target language were recorded of which 15 contained erroneous structures. Judging from the audio tape, it appeared that only in 5 (out of 15) cases teachers' feedback yielded students' self-correction. In 77 % of the time teachers' prompt resulted in the correction initiated by learners other than the error makers. Students who made the errors repaired their errors by repeating their peer correction.

The disability of learners who were reporting the story to spot the mistaken area and respond to the feedback is not an unexpected outcome. As we already discussed, tasks which pursue communicative objectives, like the ones I used here, make the story teller consume most of their attentional resources and leave them with little or no mental capacity to take care of grammatical structure. On the other hand, the language learners who do not retell the story and are observant of their peer performance experience less task demand and have more processing resources to check on their classmates and track down any possible erroneous use of the language, hence the higher proportion of correction provided by non- story tellers. Look at the following example;

(5) L. She hate people =
T: =She **hate** or she>
OL: She hates
L: She hates people who keep their house like animals because…..

In (5), for instance, teachers' prompt has resulted in the correction initiated by a learner other than the speaker. What is also important about such peer initiated correction is that although the speaker immediately repairs herself by repeating her peers' correction, such repair might not be stored in long-term memory for subsequent retrieval and accurate future use. In other words, there is not much guarantee that learners reflect back and further process the correction made on their errors. In this sense, prompt, at least the way it was

actualized in the classroom setting in our study, did entail not much engrained language processing and was not so much a discovery based process as it was suggested by Lyster (1998).

Furthermore, since the more proficient learners, those who have already possessed the implicit and explicit knowledge of the target structure, are usually the ones who grasp the intention of the teacher and provide the correct answers, it is not far off expectation to speculate that the usefulness of the prompt was somehow related to the proficiency of learners and, thereby, less proficient learners, who were slow to realize their errors and supply correction to the others, benefited the least from the activity.

Another reason for the relative inefficiency of the performance of prompt group in our study was that our prompt group lacked one of the most explicit types of CF moves i.e. meta-linguistic explanations. The other classroom studies that compared the effect of prompt with recast all employed this feedback move in their prompt group (Ammar and Spada, 2006; Ellis et al., 2006; Lyster 2004). The ample numbers of previous research studies proved that metalinguistic clues are among the most effective corrective feedback moves (Carroll & Swain, 1993; Chen, 1996; Nagta, 1998; Carroll, 2001; Sanz, 2003; Rosa & Leow, 2004). Since this feedback type, for pedagogical reasons, was not included in the CF moves of prompt group in our study, its absence may have undermined the efficacy of the performance of prompt group.

How could the presence or lack of metalinguistic information affect the findings? In their explanation for the effectiveness of prompt Ammar and Spada (2006) argue that the prompt that they used in their study was both explicit and salient and this somewhat related to the use of meatalinguistic explanation:

> …….. different moves made prompts treatment explicit and salient for two reasons. First, they unambiguously indicated the presence of an error and, therefore, encouraged and directed students to think about alternative forms. Second, once the learners were aware of the fact that there was a problem in the form that they had

> used to express their meaning, they were given meta-linguistic clues to help them identify the nature and locus of the error (p. 563).

Obviously, the lack of such meta-linguistic explanation in our prompt group made the nature of the errors less obtrusive, at least for the less proficient language learners. Though prompting language learners usually resulted in provision of correct form by the story teller or other observant learners, it is not quite clear that in the absence of meta-linguistic clues such correction led all learners to equally realize the nature of errors made.

The issue may be also viewed form psycholinguistic perspective as well. An important point regarding the efficacy of any kinds of corrective feedback including peer generated correction is related to relationship and subtle differences between the explicitness of feedback, the depth of perception and the amount of importance that language learners attach to their errors. Though the degree to which learners succeed to realize the corrective force of a feedback is proportionally related to the degree of its explicitness, not all explicit feedbacks are perceived and processed in the same manner. Learners may fail to perceive the corrective force of a feedback despite the overtly explicit way it was provided with. While explicitness is linguistic phenomena, the perception of learners is psycholinguitics matter (Sheen, 2006).

Even the perception of the error and corrective purpose behind the provided feedback may not be enough for processing and restructuring of the language of learners. It is one thing to draw the learners' attention to the existence of an error; it is another thing to make them process and incorporate the correct form into their inter-language. The issue is somehow related to the amount of importance that language learners ascribe to their errors and the role of instructors in highlighting it. Although at the end of the day the decision over importance or lack of importance of accuracy is something that learners make on their own, this does not mean that instructors have no role to play in it. The different discoursal moves and paralinguistic information that accompany any feedback could send various signals to the language learners. A teacher's immediate move from focus on form to focus on

meaning to pursue the course of discussion in a communicative task could transmit equivocal messages to the language learners regarding the ongoing correction. Learners may have this wrong perception that their mistake was not really important and could have been overlooked in the first place.

On the other hand, when teachers make a lengthy pose on an error and reformulate the erroneous part with an emphatic stress, it may send additional message, besides the linguistic one, to the learners that the error is important and needs their dire attention. In this case, it is not the explicitness or implicitness of the feedback on its own that counts for the efficiency of an error correction but the degree to which teachers manage to make language learners aware of the importance of such correction. The point here is rather a psycholinguistic and related to, among the other things, the information that accompanies feedback moves such as super segmental manipulation and paralinguistic clues. These alerting signals could bring the importance of errors into the focal attention of learners. The prompt group in our study apparently failed to receive as much of such alerting signals as corrective recast group did.

An example here may further clarify the point. In Ellis, Lowen and Erlam (2006) study recast as an implicit feedback was compared with metalinguistic explanation and proved ineffective. Metalinguistic group turned out to perform significantly better than recast and control group on test that measured the participants' implicit knowledge. Here are two examples Ellis and his colleague used to argue for the ineffectiveness of recast and effectiveness of metalinguisitics group.

(6) L: yesterday two boys, Joe and Bill visit their rich uncle=
T: =Visited
L: Visited their rich uncle21

(7) L: yesterday Joe and Bill ah went to ah Bill's grandmother and visit their grandmother=
T: =and visit > you need past tense

[21] I believe the way recast is opertionalized in this study was not implicit and to use the term implicit feedback for recast is rather misleading.

L: Visited, yes (2006, p. 363)

= signifies interruption and > rising intonation

The only argument they offer for the effectiveness of the metalinguisic explanation in example 7 in contrast to recast in example of 6 is the length of feedback

> In both episodes, the teacher's feedback move overlaps with the learner's preceding move, but because the metalinguistic feedback is longer (six words as opposed to one), it might have been better attended to and perceived as overtly corrective.

I hold that it is not the length of the feedback on its own that resulted in the effectiveness of metalinguistic feedback (7), but the employment of rising intonation along with the accompanying explanation that sent the signal to the learners that an error had occurred which needed serious consideration. To ensure that an in-depth processing of the target structure happens, learners should become aware of both the corrective force of feedback_ as it was implied by Ellis et al. above_ and also the fact that the error needs to be attended to and processed.

The argument so far could be summarized as follows:

- The prompt in the absences of confirming voice of teacher at time resulted in misconception about the area where feedback was addressed.
- Prompt largely made learners other than speaker, usually the more capable learners, first realize the error and provide the correction. The learner who made the errors usually repaired their errors by repeating the correction provided by their peers.
- Repeating peer correction does not guarantee that much in-depth processing of target structure occurred. The uptake of reformulated forms might not be stored in the long term memory for the subsequent retrieval and accurate use in the future.
- The lack of metalinguistic explanation may have made some learners less cognizant of the nature of the errors made during treatment sessions.

- Teacher' swift move to the rest of the message could have made the learners become less conscious of the importance and gravity of their errors.

Despite the lack of significant advantages for the prompt group in comparison with corrective recast and control group, it would be too immature to rule out the possibility that prompt and provision of negative evidence could bring out beneficial results. The failure to document a significant level of benefit for prompt does not mean that the benefit does not exist. One could rightly argue that the prompt, after all, resulted in some kind of language processing by some of the participants possibly none story tellers or more proficient language learners. The fact that the mean score of prompt group caught on and overtook the control group in both posttests of oral production and UGJT implies that perhaps a larger sample size of participants and more prolonged treatment might have resulted in a statistically significant difference between the prompt and other groups.

5.3. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION THREE

The fourth research question asks whether the effect of corrective feedback was fragile or could last over 10 day posttest period. The results of data analysis showed that the superior performance of learners in corrective recast group for oral narration turned out significantly meaningful in the immediate posttest, but failed to be carried over to delayed posttest. Several factors could affect the outcome.

For one thing, the inherent learning difficulty of the target structure may have undermined the effectiveness of feedback. Dekeyser (2005), for example, argues that the fact that in third person '-s' a single morpheme is used to express three different meanings (singular, third person, present tense) makes it difficult to use. Whereas these three abstract and difficult meanings are usually expressed by separate morphemes in different languages, all three need to be present at the same time so that '-s' appears in English. He further argues that learning third person '-s' is not easy since it is a redundant structure in that the use or lack of use of this tense would no contribute to the communicative message.

Drawing on Pienemann (1989) Ellis (1990) made a similar point. He holds that learning third person '-s' is difficult since it involves establishing the right connection, despite the possible distance, between the subject and verb. More recently Ellis has argued for the relatively implicit difficulty of this language structure (Ellis, 2006). All in all, the result of the delayed posttests UGJT and oral tasks proves that third person '-s' is among language structures that are more resistance to corrective feedback. Language learners should be cognitively ready and at a higher level of developmental stages before they could be expected to be responsive to the correction of any type.

The length of the instructional intervention might be another factor at work. Three treatment sessions with the total instructional intervention of two hours were administered (the first treatment took half an hour and the other two sessions some 40 minutes each). It could be possible that the duration of instruction was not long enough to bring a change in the interlanguage of the learners. A similar point was made by Lightbown and Spada (1993 cited in Chen 1996) when they commented on Ellis study (1984) in which 3 hours of instruction turned out ineffective 1.

There are some reasons to believe that both experimental groups could have benefited from longer instruction. The mean score of corrective recast group kept its upward trend, between two posttests, for all testing measures used in the study. The case was more or less similar with the prompt group as well. The mean score of prompt group never experience a downward trend from immediate to delayed posttest for all testing measures used in the study (oral tasks and grammatical and ungrammatical sentences of UGJT). This implies that perhaps with more prolonged treatment a different and more positive result might have achieved for both groups. In other words, since there was no atrophy from the first posttest to the second one for both experimental groups, it is likely that a prolonged instruction would yield different outcome.

The so-called input-poor context where the experiment was conducted and the lack of follow up activities could be other reasons for lack of long run effectiveness of instruction in our study. The fact that experiment was carried out in an EFL settings where language learners did not have access to target language outside the language classes may have negative impact on the results. Ellis et al. (2006) experiment, for example, was conducted in Scotland where learners had exposure to enough target language structure,'-ed' in their case, outside the language classes. It can be hypothesized that, despite the short 2 hour treatment sessions in their study, the sensitization to the target language structure created during the instructional sessions coupled with the exposure to language input that learners received outside the language classes led to the significant performance of meatlinguistic group in the delayed posttest of their study. Such input rich environment, however, was not present in our study. A similar argument was made by Lightbown (1991 cited in Chen, 1996) in a study in which the effect of formal instruction on adverb placement of English for French learners failed to last in long run. He argued that the reason for the transient effect of instruction was that the learners had little chance of hearing and using the language structure outside of language classes (see Chen, 1996 for a similar argument).

5.4. CONCLUSION

In our study recast, at least in the oral measures, turned out to have a short run effect while prompt was not effective neither in immediate nor in the delayed posttests. These findings seem to contradict recent classroom research studies whose results favor the superior performance of prompt group over recast group (Lyster, 2004; Ammar & Spada, 2006; Ellis et al., 2006, and Ammar, 2008). How could we reconcile these seemingly conflicting results?

For one thing the recast employed in our study was far more explicit than what they employed in their studies. None of the four studies has employed super segmental manipulation to draw learners' attention to deviant form. As we argued before, the lack of stress and intonation would reduce the explicit force of recast and make the corrective force

of it less transparent to the learners. The findings of the immediate posttest of the current study offered some experimental evidence for earlier claims about the efficacy of explicit recast. Lyster's (1998), for example, in her conclusion of the previous studies stated that "recast may be beneficial when the learners' attention is intentionally drawn to the corrective reformulation" (1998, p.73). Likewise, Nicholas et al. (2001) claimed that for recast to be effective it should to be directed at a single linguistic features and learners need to become aware of its form focused nature. Our findings, at least as far as the short run effect is concerned, offered evidence that this is indeed the case and attested Sheen's conclusion that "the more explicit recasts are, the more potentially salient they become and thus the more effective they are likely to be".

The positive effect of recast also underlined the importance of noticing as well. As Schmidt (1991) has argued, for learning to occur some degree of attention at the level of noticing is required before language form starts being incorporated into overall competence of learners. The explicitness of recast in our study promoted noticing without detracting from the communicative focus of instruction and therefore became effective in the short run.

The different outcome of the prompt group in immediate posttest and both experimental groups in delayed posttest could also be contributed to the difficulty level of the target language structure employed in our study. It could be argued than this target language structure was comparatively more difficult than what was employed in other studies. Ellis et al. (2006) used simple past regular '-ed', Ammar and Spada (2006) and Ammar (2008) used third person possessive *her* and *his*[22]. The intrinsic difficulty of these grammar features are less than third person '-s' as the latter structure, unlike the formers, is redundant and less transparent (Dekeyser, 2005). In other words, it could be the case that learners may have different response to the different language structures of varying degree of difficulties. The fact that the effect of 2 hours instruction in Ellis at al. study turned out to have long run effect and that the same amount of instruction failed to lead to a favorable

[22] Lyster (2004) used grammatical gender_ specifically noun endings that predict grammatical genders_ but did not find any preference of prompt group over recast group on the oral tasks. It seems that the structure used in their studies were less difficult than what is used in our study.

outcome in our study may imply that some language structures are more difficult to learn, and they may need more prolonged instruction than the others.

Our findings also echoed the previous studies in which it was found the recast may have selective effect on different language structures. Iwashita (2003), for example, found that recast was effective for learning of one of two language Japanese structures she used in her study. While recast had a beneficial short term effects on Japanese te-from, it was not effective on two locative initial targets. In Long et al. (1998) study the effect of recast and models on learning of Japanese fronted locative constructions and adjective ordering and Spanish object topicalization and adverb placement was compared. The recast group significantly outperformed the model group on adverb placement rules in Spanish while no significant gain was reported for both Japanese structures and Spanish object topicalization. Ishida (2003) who examined the effect of intensive recast on learning of Japanese aspectual form *-te i-(ru)* by four English native speakers using a time-series design found that the effect of recast was mostly reflected on resultative aspect marker than progressive or habitual aspect marker. The researcher argued that the learners' developmental readiness might be a factor for the selective effect of recast.

Krashen (1993) has argued for none interface position where the implicit and explicit knowledge neither converts nor interacts with each other. He also holds that the effect of formal instruction including corrective feedback had no effect on the spontaneous language production. "… the research says that the effects of direct instruction is usually short lasting and do not become part of acquired competence" (p. 725). While the findings of our study may seemingly attest the above mention quotation of Krashen, I believe that it is too immature to interpret our data as such. The results of second posttest do not prove that the effect of instruction atrophied. Indeed, the mean score of both experiment groups in both oral and written tests kept their upward trend, and if it was not for the improvement in the mean score of the control group for the oral production task, there would have been significant among group difference for delayed posttest as well. If our findings do not

support the interface positions between implicit and explicit knowledge, it does not support none interface positions either.

An important point about the study was that learners in the prompt group expectedly employed uptake more than learners in recast as they repeated the correction offered by their peers but as the results of the study show uptake obviously did not result in language acquisition, not even in the short run. In other words, uptake of learners could not be taken as noticing as it could be simple parrot like repetition of others' reformulations (Gass, 2003). The opposite is also hold true; the fact that uptake is optional may allow the learners in recast group not to react to the teachers corrections while they still process the language. As Mackey and Philp (1998) have shown learners who receive recast could improve their knowledge of target language even though they do not reveal any uptake in their immediate responses.

In a meta-analysis of 49 experimental and quasi-experimental studies investigating the effect of form focused instruction Norris and Ortega (2000) found that the great number of these studies were short term in nature and applied measures that 'required the application of L2 rules in highly focused and discrete ways'(p. 483). The measurement device used in this way would favor the use of explicit knowledge at the cost of overlooking implicit knowledge. The point was taken care of in our study. UGJT and oral production tasks were employed to tap the implicit and explicit knowledge of the test takers. This could be considered as the strong point of the study.

The fact the participants were asked to correct the incorrect language items of UGJT affected the mean score of the participants on this test which in tern led the researcher to make a different interpretation of the data from that found in other studies. For example, learners in Ellis et al. (2006) scored high in ungrammatical items of UGJT and Ellis and his colleagues interpreted this as a sign of existence of a considerable level of explicit knowledge of learners regarding the target language structure. The fact is that it is highly unlikely that they would have got the same results had they asked learners to do the

correction part as we did in our study. The point here is that any change in test design may affect the total scores of language learners which in turn may affect the interpretation of the findings of a study[23].

Finally, as it is always the case with all research studies, the absence of evidence of a positive effect for an experimental variable does not equal the evidence of absence (Leeman, 2003). The fact that the mean score of both experimental groups on both written and oral measures were lower than control group before the commence of the experiment and they overtook the control group in both immediate and delayed posttests suggests that it is likely that with a larger number of participants and/or extended amount of instruction the both experimental groups would yield a better outcome.

Limitations

Like all classroom research, the study suffered some inevitable limitations:

1. One of the most important limitations of the study was the sample size. A larger sample size of participants would have allowed more generalizable findings and prevented against the likelihood that individual differences affect the data.
2. The idiosyncratic attitude of language learners towards the importance of accuracy was a point that was not taken care of in the study. This could be an intervening factor especially if we consider the point that the sample size was considerably small. Learners, for example, may not be responsive to any feedback type if they do not perceive them of much importance.
3. The third limitation of study was the length of treatment. The instructional intervention was actualized in three sessions, each lasting between 30 to 45 minutes. A more prolonged treatment might have produced a different result.

[23] . The use of additional step of correcting the ungrammatical sentences is not new. Moranoi (2000) also used a similar step presumably to reduce the chance effect as well.

4. The fourth point is the motivation of participants. The subjects were chosen among students who had already failed the regular classes in Prep school and had to repeat the whole program during the summer. Most of these subjects were still under the shadow of their regular class failure and might not be responsive to the feedback they received. Moreover, at least some of these students proved to have great difficulty with learning a new language and may not represent the ordinary language learners with average language aptitude. Previous studies, such as the one conducted by Dekeyser's (1993), have suggested that aptitude and motivation could influence the efficacy of CF[24].
5. The fifth point is the target structure in the study. Third person '-s' is only used and measured in the simple present tense to talk about daily and habitual activities. Third person '-s' and simple present in general could also be used to refer to future events. This was not addressed in the study for the sake of simplicity.
6. The sixth limitation is that the selected structure was a language feature that learners had already received a considerable amount of instruction and accumulated some explicit knowledge about. This, of course, allowed us to address the question of relationship between explicit knowledge and implicit knowledge and whether different feedback had any effect on the structures that were partially established. All the same, we cannot claim with any certainty that a new structure for which learners had no prior knowledge would result in the same or similar results.
7. The seventh limitation of the study was that of 6 recordings of the treatment sessions of experiment groups, only three remained useable. Three others were damaged due to some technical problems. A better judgment of what went on in each classroom could have been made if all recordings were available.
8. The eight limitation of the study concerns the elicitation technique used alongside repetition in the study. The choice of grammatical structure as the dependent variable made it convenient to use only one of the three different elicitation

[24] . In his study, Dekeyser (1993) found that the experiment group, despite one year of explicit error correction, failed to perform better than control group. The findings led Dekeyser to conclude that other factors, besides CF, such as motivation, language aptitude and anxiety might be at work to effect change in language of learners.

technique i.e. 'elicit completion'. Other two techniques i.e. elicitative questions, such as 'How do we say it in English?' and 'reformulation requests', such as 'Can you say it in another way?' (see Sheen 2004) were not used in the study. Though the choice made here was linguistically motivated, cautious should be exercised with generalizing the findings to the (in) efficiency of all three elicitation techniques.

9. The last but not the least limitation of the study concerned the rather inconsistent discoursal move that proceeded prompt feedback. Though it was not originally intended, sometimes the trend of classroom discourse made it inevitable for the instructor, after prompting learners to do self correction, to provide the correct form of target structure to either confirm the accuracy of the reformulation of the incorrect structure by the learners or to keep on the flow of conversation. Judging from the data of available recordings, the provided positive evidence, in 18 % of time, made the correct use of target structure salient to the learners, and thereby narrowed down the line between the recast and prompt group. However, since in 82 % of time either no positive evidence was provided or it was provided in a non-salient manner, it seems that the provided positive evidence does not count much in a bigger picture of main correction procedure. All the same, one wonders how the data might have looked if the teacher had managed to totally withdraw the provision of positive evidence in any form of it.[25]

What seems to be interesting is the lack of recording of such instances of confirmation comments of teacher/researchers in the recent classroom studies which investigated the effectiveness of prompt. No video or audio recording was available in Ammar and Spada

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[25]. The exact data for after correction move of two recordings are as follows; 56 % of time students corrections were provided with no positive evidence from teachers, 22 % the teachers use of positive evidence was in a non-salient manner to keep the flow of conversation and facilitate topic continuation, 18 % the positive evidence was provided in salient manner.
It is also worth mentioning that it is hard to imagine how a total refraining of providing positive evidence by instructor could be actualized in a classroom setting without sacrificing the naturalness of classroom discourse. After all, learners usually search for some sort of confirmation about their self-corrected responses even if it is only an approval gesture of their teacher.

(2006) study where repetition, metalinguistic information and elicitation were jointly compared with recast. The instructors were simply unwilling to record their classrooms instruction. So it is not very much clear what happened in the language classes during the four weeks instruction period. In Ellis, Lowen & Erlam (2006) study, where metalinguistic explanation was compared with recast, though recording was available, it is not mentioned how instructors responded to learners repair after students corrected their errors upon receiving metalinguistic information.

5.5. FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could be expanded on several lines to help us with better understanding of the complicated process through which second language is learned. These are outlined below;

- Our study had only three treatment sessions and lasted for a week. Ammar and Spada (2006) treatment had 12 sessions and lasted for four weeks. While our study found no significant effect for prompt group, theirs turned out to be significant. Research could be designed to investigate the effect of duration of treatment on language learning. It could compare the effect of more sustained treatment with shorter ones.
- As the results of the study shows the mean score of both experimental groups kept improving in all two posttest testing sessions. Future research could conduct a second delayed posttest, for example, one month later to find out if the positive result of any feedback type, such as explicit recast, is achieved or durable.
- The corrective recast presented in our study had both positive and negative enhanced evidence where stress and intonation were used to make the use of deviant parts and the required changes transparent to learners. What is not clear is that whether enhanced positive evidenced on its own is effective enough to improve the language of learners, or else it should always be accompanied with negative evidence. Leeman (2003) found some evidence that enhance positive evidence by

itself could be effective, but her study was conducted in a laboratory setting where the findings could not be easily transferred into real life classroom situation. Future classroom research could cast light on this area as well.

- Sheen (2006) argues the explicitness of recast cannot guarantee its salience since salience is a psycholinguistic construct and depends on the perception of learners. The future research could investigate learners' perception of the characteristics of (explicit) recast and prompt. That is what features of explicit feedback is best perceived and processed by learners.
- The target language structure that is used in our study was third person '-s' According to Ellis third person '-s' is relatively difficult language item to learn in terms of implicit knowledge. It is not clear if corrective feedback have the same effect on language structures with different degree of implicit and explicit difficulties.
- The target language structure used in our study was the one for which learners have already received a noticeable amount of instruction. It is not clear if different corrective feedbacks have the same effect on completely new language structure for which learners have not accumulated much declarative knowledge. As always, further research is needed.

The complicated process by which language learners trade off between meaning and form are at the heart of second language acquisition studies. It is also the dilemma of many language teachers who, on one hand, wish to urge their learners to involve more actively in communicative tasks, and on the other hand, fear that the orientations to such meaning loaded activities may result in negligent concerns about language structures. CF is the promising areas where most teachers have put their hope in to reconcile the seemingly incongruous elements of language; form and meaning. While the previous studies have sketched the main path and laid the foundation, much more research is needed to consolidate our knowledge and push our frontier further ahead. The current study is yet one contribution to the body of knowledge about the role of CF in SLA.

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APPENDIX 1

Treatment 1

Text 1

Stephanie is a retired school teacher who has recently had a problem. Read and retell the story to your friend. Explain what her problem is. Listen to your friends' version of the story. How do you think the problem could be resolved?

My name is Stephanie and I am a retired teacher. I live in small flat in a safe and beautiful neighborhood, but I have recently got a problem. A new neighbor has just moved into our flat and he is sort of strange. I think he does not have a job because he usually stays at home in the morning and sometimes leaves his flat in the afternoon. I guess he goes to a pub to drink alcohol or something. His girlfriend sometimes comes to visit him and she usually stays during the night. I really don't like this; boys and girls together. He always say "hello" when he sees me but I don't answer him. I don't like careless young people especially in my flat. I think I should talk to other neighbors and ask him to leave to another place.

Treatment 1

Text 2

George has recently moved into a new neighborhood and has run into a problem. Read and retell the story to your friend. Explain what his problem is. Listen to your friends' version of the story. How do you think the problem could be resolved?

My name is George and I have just got a new job in a hospital. I keep the record of the patients. It is not an easy job. I have to put the information of the patients into both paper files and computers, and like the other people in the hospital sometimes I have to stay in the hospital at nights. I have three night shifts per week which start at 6 PM and finishes 7 AM. I have just moved into a new neighborhood near the hospital so that I don't lose much time on the traffic. I am the sort of person who does not like cleaning a lot so my sister sometimes comes to my house to tidy up things.

I have got a small problem though. I think there is something wrong with the people in my flat because they don't usually talk to me. I always try to be polite with them and say "hello" to them whenever I see them, but I don't usually receive any answer. Sometime I think I should move into another place where I could have more friendly neighbors.

Treatment 2

Text 1

You are going to read a short text about how Tom Anderson teaches math in high school. Retell the story to your friend, and listen to your friend story about teaching techniques of another math teacher. How are they different or similar? Which teaching technique do you think is more effective?

I am Tom Anderson and I teach math in high school. My teaching method is a little different from the other teachers. Firstly, I believe that students learn faster when they feel that solving math problem is enjoyable, so I usually use a lot of fun in my classes. I teach math by adding funny stories to it and asking student to solve funny math problems. Secondly, I allow my students to choose their homework. So I only introduce two or three exercises at the end of each lesson. Students then choose the one they really like to do. They can, of course, choose not to do any if they don't feel ready for it. I believe that by giving them freedom I also make them feel more responsible for their learning. Most of them may choose not to do the homework at the beginning but eventually they start to think for themselves and once do, they do it wholeheartedly.

Another important point about my teaching is that I hardly check my students' absence or presence. Like doing homework I believe that every student comes to the class if he or she finds it really useful. There is no point making a student to sit in a place for one hour if she does not really want to be there. Learning starts when one really wants to learn. Another point about my way of teaching is that I think perhaps the most important thing in any education setting is the relationship between teachers and students so I always try to be totally friendly with my students. I don't usually sit at my desk. I walk around the class sit at different places where I could be close to my students. I speak with them or even ask personal questions about their daily lives. This way I want them to see me not as an outsider but somebody who is very much similar to them. I also never call them by their last name. I try instead to use their first name. This is the way their friends call them. The way they are called at home. So why not a teacher uses the same way! One last thing about me is that I try not to look very formal so I usually don't put on tie and suit because I believe formal dress makes you look different form your students and this may create a distance between you and them. I believe that learning math will become more enjoyable if other teachers try some of the techniques I use everyday.

Treatment 2

Text 2

You are going to read a short text about how Albert Anderson teaches math in high school. Retell the story to your friend, and listen to your friend story about teaching techniques of another math teacher. How are they different or similar? Which teaching technique do you think is more effective?

I am Albert Anderson and I teach math in a high school. I have some strong ideas about how teaching actually should be. I conduct my classes in a rather a serious way. I believe that most teachers use more fun than it is really needed in their classes. They do this because they want to have a happy class hour but the final result is that they sacrifice the

very reason the education is all about; that is learning. I believe that if a student wants to learn something he or she will learn. Adding fun brings more problem than it solves. It makes students to come to class looking for pleasure rather than something useful for their future. It makes student less patient, easily to bored and careless.

Another important point about my teaching is that I give a lot of importance to students' participation. The first thing I do in my class is to call my students' names to check who is present and who is absent. I believe that high school students are still too young to decide for themselves. They may never attend the school in their whole life if they are left free. Another point is that I try to keep a certain distance between myself and students. I do this because I think that when I start to act too friendly, most of the students don't usually take my classes serious enough. So, I always call my students with there title; Mr. Brown or Miss Diana, for example. I want to make them feel that they are grown up and ready to take responsibility. I am also very careful about the way I dress. I usually put on formal clothes. This makes my students to take the class serious. I don't like teachers who dress sloppy. A colleague of mine, Mr. Anderson, always dresses like that and it really bothers me. I believe that teachers should definitely look like teachers, different from the way students look. I also give a lot of importance to homework I assign homework for everybody and the next they I collect all of them take them home and give grades to them. I believe that most of actual learning happens at home when a student starts to think about problems on their own. A real student never complains about homework. It is only the lazy student who does not like homework. I believe if a teacher wants to have serious and hardworking students, he should start from himself.

Treatment 3

Text 1

Angela is a night cleaner. **Read about a typical day of his life and find out what could be the source of his problem. Does he have a happy life why or why not! How is her life different from that of John's?**

My name is Angela. I am married and I have two children. I work as a night cleaner for a private company. I work from 9 at night to 6 in the morning five nights a week. I used to work as a nurse in a hospital but the shifts were so wrong with me. I could not take care of the children. Now I spend a lot of time with my kids at home. I feel more like a mother now. The only problem is that I see my husband only a couple of hours in the evening but I think that does not create much problem for a happy marriage. I earn something around 40 $ a night which of course is not enough but this is the only job that fits me at the moment.

The work I do is not physically very hard but not very pleasant either. I empty waist paper basket, clean toilets and vacuum the floor. I hate the people who make their offices messy like animals. I wonder how these people could be successful while they don't know the very basic rule of life. The fact that I work at nights does not worry me much. There is a lot of light in the building and I work with three other cleaners. Indeed, I sort of enjoy working at night. We always make a lot of jokes and laugh until mornings and there is no one to stop us. Complete freedom!

I get home at 6:30 in the morning, get the children ready for the school, and then start on my own housework. Sometimes I go to bed for three or four hours a day, others I don't go

to bed at all. I often go two or three days without any sleep. It was difficult at first but I have got used to it now.

The point is that I sort of like my job. I think I will do it for a couple of years before my kids grow up. After all I don't want to miss nice midnight chat and socializing with other cleaners so soon.

Treatment 3
Text 2

John is a teller in a bank. Read about a typical day of his life and find out what could be the source of his problems. Does he have a happy life why or why not! How is his life different from that of Angela's?

My name is John and I work in a bank as a teller. People always say that I must be glad to have a good job. They say it takes years for people to find a job like mine but I think this is not necessarily true for everybody, definitely not about me.
I live in the suburb and the bank is in the centre of the city, so I wake up at 6 o'clock in the morning, have a small breakfast, rush out so that I don't miss the service bus that takes me to the bank. I work ten hours a day six days a week. The working hours is eight hours a day but since like every one else I have taken some loan from the bank to buy a house, I prefer to work a couple of extra hours in the afternoon everyday. I even go to work on Saturdays. When I get home late in the evening I usually have no energy to do anything else. I hardly watch television or even speak with my roommate. I feel so tired that all I want to do is to eat something and go straight bed.

The work itself is also monotonous. Being a teller is not an easy job. I give and receive customers' money and also help them with information. Most of the customers don't know

how to handle their problems, so I tell them how to fill out a form, how to pay there debt, how to apply for a loan… etc. Sometimes I repeat myself two or three times and they still fail to understand what they need to do, which of course makes me angry.

There is not much time for socializing at work. Neither is there outside. On Saturdays afternoon, I sometimes go out to a pub to drink with my friends, but even there I don't feel much relaxed. The last train to suburb leaves around 11:30, but since the late hour train is so crowded, I always prefer to take earlier ones, or else I have to give a lot of money to the taxi to take me home.

My work has given me a lot of things. I live in my own house now. I make a lot of money, something that most of the young people dream about everyday. I go out with my colleagues whenever I make time for it. But I think my job has taken me a lot of things as well. I work more like a machine now. I hardly think about anything else besides banking and my job, I think the creative part of my brain that once worked so well when I was a child rarely works now. And above all I will never be the great a man I dreamed about once. All this is because I work as a teller in a bank. A great job for many, but not for me!

APPENDIX 2

Untimed Grammaticality Judgment Test

A. Ungrammatical Items Targeting Third Person '-s'[26]

1. The computer in my office break down every week.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

2. Our country need to spend more money on sports.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

3. Rice grow better in a wet climate.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

4. Studying in a foreign country cost a lot of money.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

5. Tom's brother smoke cigarette when he has exams.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

[26] The items are separated into ungrammatical, grammatical and distracters for a matter of convenience. In the actual tests they were used in a scrambled manner.

6. Our school bus is old and make a lot of noise.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

7. Their dog bark terribly at nights.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

II. Grammatical Items Targeting Third Person '-s'

1. He is a professional football player, and makes a lot of money.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

2. My mother's company pays her a lot of money.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

3. Watching football on TV changes students' habits.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

4. My sister works very hard.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

5. A plane flies from here to London every Friday.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

6. A new research study shows that young men usually drive fast.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

7. Maria's friend speaks two foreign languages.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

C. DISTRCATORS

Jack had studied German for two years before he accepted the job in Berlin.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

I can't afford buying a new printer for my computer.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

Please don't call me in the evening. I will be washing the baby at that time.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

I have always wanted to know where do birds go in winter.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

She talked so fast that I couldn't be able to interrupt her to say I was sorry.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

My husband was talking to our neighbor while I made the lunch.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

If I had a lot of money, I would buy a house with a garden.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

George is the person who ideas are the best.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

If you go to the interview, you probably will get the job.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

Could you give me an advice about a good restaurant around here?

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

We can't sit at this table. These seats are reserved.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

At first, I was not used to starting work so late but this has changed.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

I would like to see the photos you took on holiday.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

He lived in Italy for several years after the war.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

We wouldn't have missed the bus if you did not stop to chat with Mary.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

It is important to take enough rest when you have a headache.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

I am not sure if you are aware about the risk.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

However the weather was terrible, we decided to go out for a walk.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

It is much more easier to learn swimming than playing football.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

The town has become an industrial center in 1950s.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

The party was so boring. I wish I did not go there.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

We had our car washed for a little amount of money.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

The room is not big enough for our meeting.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

Everybody must learn how to drive a car.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

I can’t find my keys. I must lost them.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

More than twenty million people were killed in the Second World War.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

Old people sit always in the parks.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

His father asked him where he had been the whole night.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

The movie is free so we needn't buy any ticket.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

We had our car washed for a little amount of money.

I. definitely correct □ probably correct □ definitely incorrect □ probably incorrect □ I am not sure. □

……

APPENDIX 3

PRETEST

Read the following short story about the daily life of Lucy. You can use the words listed below to help you remember the story.

My name is Lucy. I work for an engineering company. I usually wake up at seven in the morning take a shower and go straight to my friend's house, Rebecca's. She lives next door and works in the accounting department of the same company. She is such a nice friend. We usually use her car to go to work. Sometimes, in the summer mornings, we wake up a little earlier and walk to work. While walking, we usually talk about our problems. I am the type of person who likes sharing my personal experience with other people and Rebecca is just such a good listener. She enjoys listening to people and I think she likes listening to everything that I talk about. We get to work around 8: 30. The first thing I do is to drink a hot cup of coffee. I don't feel really awake until I drink a couple of coffees in the morning. I usually go to lunch around 1 pm. Sometimes, I wait for Rebecca to finish her work and then we go to lunch together. It is more enjoyable when we are together. We usually have a short chat while eating our lunch. We can't do it anymore these days though. The reason is that she seems so busy. It looks that she works more than usual. Yesterday she did not go to lunch because she had to finish a report. I am her friend and I think I should talk to her and ask her not to overwork specially during the lunch break. Or may be there is another reason why she wants to work so hard?

Working place?

Wake up time?

Going to Rebecca's house

Using her car

Walking and talking in summer

Time of arriving work

Drinking coffee

Lunch with Rebecca

The problem!

POSTTEST

Read the short story below about the daily life of Rebecca. You can use the words listed below to help you remember the story.

My name is Rebecca. I work for an engineering company. I usually wake up at 6:45 in the morning and have a small breakfast. Then my friend Lucy comes to my house. She lives next door and works in the computer department of the same company. We usually use my car to go to work. Sometimes, in the summer mornings, we wake up a little earlier and walk to work. While walking, Lucy talks about her problems. She is a nice friend but she does not like listening to other people. When I talk, which rarely happens, she always interrupts me. The fact is she enjoys talking about herself and her own life and, of course, she talks a lot. We get to work around 8: 30. The first thing that I do is to check my computer to see if there is any new email to answer. Almost everyday Lucy comes to my office and we go to lunch together. To tell you the truth, I would rather have my lunch alone. She talks all the time and I really don't like listening to people while I am having lunch. I don't know how I should tell Lucy this. I don't want to hurt my friend.

Working place?
Wake up time?
Having breakfast
Lucy coming
Going to work in the car
Summer morning walk and talk
Lucy's character
Arriving time
Checking mail
Going to lunch with Lucy
The problem!

DELAYED POSTTEST

Read the short story about the daily life of a night sister. You can use the words listed below to help you remember the story.

Night sister

My name is Ferzana and I am a night sister in a hospital in London. The working hours are quite fixed. I work eight nights on, six nights off from 9 p.m. to 8 a.m. I get an hour break to drink tea and coffee which is very welcome about midnight when I start feeling a little sleepy.

Except for some small problems, the night shifts are ok. One of the problems is that when I finish my eight night shifts, it usually takes me two or four days to get over it and get used to sleeping at night again. The other problem is the headache that I get from the lighting in the hospital.

During the day my job is usually physical; changing beds, giving medicine to the patients ,…etc but at nights it changes into a psychological one. I talk with patients and listen to their life stories .This is, in fact, the happiest part of my job when I manage to win their trust and make them share their feelings with me.

The job has not created a lot of problems for me though. I share a flat in a hospital house with a nurse on different shifts so that we could work out shopping and cleaning between us. I do all my socializing in six days when I am not in duty. I have even asked my friends not come before six o'clock because if I am going to do a night work, I must get a good day's sleep. If I work well I may become a nurse tutor and train sisters in the future.

Who knows!

Working hours

Two problems at work

Her job in the morning

Her job at night

Socializing

Future plan