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A Practical Inquiry on Patterns of Corrective Feedback and Modified Output in an Adult High-beginning ESL Grammar Class

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Abstract

Corrective feedback has been accorded an important role in second language (L2) acquisition (Chaudron, 1988; Long, 1996), partly because it may allow opportunities for modified output, a process that is claimed to benefit L2 development (Swain, 1985, 1995). Classroom studies have revealed different feedback types associated with different levels of success in inviting modified output depending on various mediating factors, such as characteristics of feedback, learner differences and instructional contexts. The present descriptive self-study examined patterns of corrective feedback and learner responses in an adult high-beginning ESL grammar class. The findings showed that recasts were the most frequent yet least effective feedback type, often followed by a majority of peer-initiated and teacher-initiated topic continuation. The findings also revealed some error patterns in my responses to students' non-target utterances, but students did not appear to notice my errors. These results suggest some pedagogical implications with respect to my role as a facilitator and monitor as well as raising students' awareness of self- and peer-corrections.

Keywords: self-study, corrective feedback, modified output, ESL, grammar

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A considerable body of research on the role of interaction in second-language acquisition has investigated how corrective feedback, namely, “responses to learner utterances containing an error” (Ellis, 2006, p. 28), can facilitate L2 acquisition. Feedback, in general, can help to “make problematic aspects of learners’ interlanguage salient, and give them additional opportunities to focus on their production or comprehension” (Mackey, 2007, p. 15). Particularly, corrective feedback, if sufficiently salient to learners, may result in cognitive comparison between the learners’ interlanguage and the target language, during which learners can test hypotheses in their interlanguage, restructure form-meaning mappings and approach more target-like output eventually (Ellis, 1994; Gass, 1997). Researchers have examined not only dyadic interactions (Oliver, 1995; Mackey and Philp, 1998; Leeman, 2003; Egi, 2007), but also classroom settings featuring student-student and teacher-student interaction (Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Lyster, 1998b; Doughty and Varela, 1998; Sheen, 2004; Yang, 2009). While the effectiveness of corrective feedback is found to be associated with various factors, such as feedback types (Panova and Lyster, 2002), linguistic targets (Mackey, Gass, and McDonough, 2000), instructional settings (Lyster and Mori, 2006), learner differences such as literacy (Tarone and Bigelow, 2007), and working memory (Trofimovich, Ammar, and Gatbonton, 2007), Lyster, Saito, and Sato (2013) made a strong claim that the provision of oral feedback is “undoubtedly more effective than no feedback” (p. 30). Many researchers have undertaken observational studies to describe patterns of corrective feedback and students’ responses in a variety of instructional settings. Vasquez and Harve (2010), especially, have encouraged teachers to conduct practical inquiry on corrective feedback they provide in their own classrooms for pedagogical benefits. The participating

teacher practitioners in their studies all reported increased awareness and knowledge about corrective feedback and other aspects of their classroom teaching. The present self-study is action research motivated by the desire to conduct such a practical inquiry for my own professional development and builds on previous observational research on corrective feedback to describe and analyze error treatment in my own class.

Literature Review

Action Research

Action research, or practitioner research, "seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people" (Reason and Bradbury, 2001, p. 1). Within second language education, action research facilitates reflective language teaching, thus serving the need of practicing teachers for professional development (Farrel, 2007). Descriptive self-study is commonly used in action research by teachers striving to improve their pedagogy (see Stewart, 2001; Hardy and Li, 2013; Lee, 2013).

Corrective Feedback Types

Previous classroom observational studies have revealed some patterns of teachers' provision of corrective feedback. In a study conducted in French immersion schools, Lyster and Ranta (1997) have identified corrective feedback, which Lyster (2002) further classified into 3 types: explicit correction, recasts, or prompts. Suppose a student produces an ill-formed utterance, "I wake up early today." In the case of explicit correction, the teacher supplies the correct form and clearly indicates the error in the student's utterance such as "We should say 'woke up' early". In recasts, the teacher implicitly reformulates all or part of the student's

utterance; for example, s/he may say "You woke up". Prompts in turn can be divided into 4 types: a) elicitation, in which the teacher elicits a reformulation from the student by asking a question or pausing to allow the student to complete the teacher's statement with rising intonation (e.g., 'You?'); b) metalinguistic clues, in which the teacher provides comments or questions related to the grammaticality of the student's utterance (e.g., 'We should use the simple past.'); c) clarification requests, in which the teacher indicates an error has occurred or the student's message is misunderstood (e.g., 'What?' or 'I don't understand.'); or d) repetition, in which the teacher repeats the student's non-target utterance with adjusted intonation to highlight the error (e.g., 'You wake up early?') Lyster and Ranta adopted the construct of repair, which is "correct reformulation of an error" (p. 49), from Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977) to differentiate prompts from the other two types of feedback. Explicit corrections and recasts use other-repair, where the correct form is provided for the students, while in prompts, which promote self-repair, the correct answer is not given, and students are invited to identify the nature of the error and repair it.

Corrective feedback may vary in its degree of explicitness to students. If placed along a continuum, recasts are more implicit than explicit correction because recasts require students to infer the teacher's corrective intent without a direct signal that errors have been committed. Within the category of prompts, clarification requests and repetitions fall on the more implicit side of the continuum, as compared to elicitation and metalinguistic clues (Loewen and Nabei, 2007). The less explicit the corrective feedback, the more likely it is for students to misinterpret the corrective entailment as communicative (Mackey et al., 2000; Kim and Han, 2007). For example, after the student's utterance "I wake up early today", a clarification request "Pardon?" appears to be less effective in signaling the error than a metalinguistic clue like "Use the simple

past". Possibly, the student may misperceive the clarification request not as corrective feedback but rather as a conversational move to resolve communication breakdown. As Lyster and Saito (2010) have suggested, classifying corrective feedback categorically as either explicit or implicit has proven problematic. The explicitness of corrective feedback is difficult to gauge because learners' perception of what is salient to them in the feedback may be subject to a number of variables identified in previous research, such as characteristics of a given feedback move (Sheen, 2006; Loewen and Philp, 2006), linguistic targets of the feedback (Mackey et al, 2000; Kim and Han, 2007), and instructional settings (Nicholas, Lightbown, and Spada, 2001; Lyster and Mori, 2006).

Different types of corrective feedback have been found to have different effects on L2 learning. Researchers have used various measures of the effect of corrective feedback, including 1) modified output such as uptake and repair (Lyster and Ranta, 1997); 2) immediate post-tests (Ellis, 2007); 3) delayed post-tests (Ellis, 2007); 4) learner noticing of corrective feedback by means of recall (Mackey et al., 2000). The present study will focus on modified output.

Modified Output

In addition to providing learners with opportunities to notice linguistic aspects of their output, corrective feedback may also incite learners to modify their output. A number of researchers (Swain, 1995; Izumi, 2002; McDonough, 2005) have argued that modified output can contribute to L2 development by forcing learners to reflect upon their problematic output and notice the gap between their developing L2 and the target language. As Swain (1995) postulates, modified output can "stimulate learners to move from the semantic, open-ended non-

deterministic, strategic processing prevalent in comprehension, to the complete grammatical processing needed for accurate production' (p. 128).

A number of factors appear to mediate learners' responses to corrective feedback. One factor is the type of corrective feedback at different levels of explicitness, as reviewed in the previous section. Most studies find prompts to be more likely to trigger a change in the learner's immediate output (Lyster, 1997; Panova and Lyster, 2002), while a few other studies lend support to recasts as no less effective (Ellis, Basturkmen, and Loewen, 2001; Sheen, 2004). Most of these studies adopted the construct of "uptake" to measure immediate effect of corrective feedback. As defined by Lyster and Ranta (1997), uptake refers to "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" (p. 49). Prompts appear to invite more uptake than recasts possibly because prompts have a relatively more explicit focus on form. Compared to negotiation of meaning, negotiation of form may lead to a greater likelihood that learners' attention is directed to the language being produced to express meaning (Gass, 1997). Prompts, as form-focused negotiation, require more learner involvement in processing the linguistic form than recasts, which makes no such "participatory demands on the learner" (Mackey et al. 2000, p. 491). Lyster and Ranta (1997) claimed that recasts are more ambiguous than prompts to students in terms of corrective entailment. He found that teachers often repeat students' well-formed utterances, which might blur the line between recasts and such non-corrective repetitions that are aimed at facilitating communication. Students often have to differentiate whether the teachers' intentions are concerned with form or meaning.

However, recasts can be more effective when their explicitness is enhanced. Loewen and Philp (2006) reported recasts to be effective in a study conducted in 12 intermediate adult ESL

classes in Auckland, New Zealand. While 88.3% of elicitations were found to be associated with successful uptake, 72.6% of recasts also led to successful uptake. The researchers attributed the success of recasts to certain salience-enhancing characteristics: shorter length of recasts, stress on errors, declarative intonation, longer form-focused exchange episodes, and one change only. Sheen (2006) echoed Loewen and Philp that uptake is positively related to declarative, short and pronunciation-focused recasts. She also differentiated four types of changes that were targeted by recasts: 1) deletion (when the reformulation removes a linguistic element), as in "S: Whitman comes to my mind. T: comes to mind"; 2) substitution (when the reformulation replaces one element with another element), as in "S: on a, on a party. T: at a, at a party"; 3) reordering (when the order of the elements in the reformulation is changed), as in "S: The voice tone is different. T: tone of voice"; 4) combination (when any of the changes above is combined), as in "S: And she wants he book at hotel. T: She wants HIM to book a hotel". Substitution was found by Sheen to be the most effective in generating successful uptake.

Another factor affecting the effectiveness of corrective feedback may be their linguistic targets. Learners tend to modify their output after feedback targeting lexical and phonological errors than after feedback targeting morphosyntactic errors (Pica, 1994; Mackey et al, 2000; Kim and Han, 2007). This tendency can be accounted for by the communicative value of the non-target elements. As Mackey et al (2000) have argued, a primary purpose in any interaction is to understand one's interlocutor (i.e., a conversation partner). Phonology and lexis, as meaning-bearing elements, may be relatively more important than morphemes and syntax to achieve common ground of understanding. The interlocutor may also be a possible factor affecting recast effectiveness. In a study of first-year college students learning English as a foreign language in Japan, Sato and Lyster (2007) found a significantly larger amount of modified output in learner-

learner dyads than in learner-native speaker dyads regardless of the feedback type learners received. Sato and Lyster attributed the higher rate of modified output to the fact that learners provided more feedback that elicited modified output to each other than the native speakers did. Learners' retrospective recalls revealed that learners played an active role when their interlocutor was also a learner, while a passive role in interaction with a native speaker, who they thought was able to guess their intended meaning. Besides, most learners felt more pressure when communicating with a native speaker than with a learner.

The degree to which modified output resembles target-like exemplars also seems to be subject to some learner-internal factors, such as proficiency level and working memory. Many researchers (Mackey and Philp, 1998; Ammar and Spada, 2006, Brown, 2009) have established a positive relationship between proficiency level and modified output. Learners at a more advanced developmental stage seem to be more likely to modify their output after corrective feedback than low proficiency learners because one has to reach a stage of developmental readiness to identify form-meaning mismatches and reconstruct non-target output. Thus, the researchers speculated that individual readiness might be associated with one's ability to notice recasts. Working memory has also been found to predict modified output (Mackey et al., 2010); the higher a learner's working memory capacity, the more likely s/he is to modify output.

Recasts and Potential Ambiguity

Recasts have been of particular interest to me, as a teacher practitioner, given a majority of previous classroom findings that teachers show a strong preference for using recasts to correct students' errors (see the review by Lyster et al., 2013). The preponderance of recasts has been found in a variety of instructional settings, including: elementary immersion classrooms (Lyster

and Ranta, 1997; Lee, 2007), college foreign language classrooms (Roberts, 1995), high school English as a foreign language classrooms (EFL) (Tsang, 2004), and adult English as a second language classrooms (ESL) (Ellis et al. 2001; Panova and Lyster, 2002; Sheen, 2004).

In meaningful communication, recasts not only present target-like models of learner's non-target utterances, but also convey negative evidence. A recast is semantically contingent upon a learner's erroneous utterance and usually juxtaposed with it. Long (1996) has attributed the value of recasts to this semantic contingence, which may free up learners' attentional resources from negotiating intended meaning and allow them to focus on form. It may be that, by contrasting the discrepancy between a non-target utterance and its target-like reformulation, recasts prompt learners to notice the gap and preferably initiate a change in their original output. Some researchers (Ranta and Lyster, 2007; Sheen and Ellis, 2011) have differentiated didactic recasts (targeting form) and conversational recasts (targeting meaning) in terms of communicative value. While both consist of reformulations of non-target utterances, didactic recasts refer to those given in the absence of communication breakdown (i.e., targeting form, mainly morphosyntactic errors), while conversational recasts are aimed at resolving a communication breakdown (i.e., targeting meaning, mainly lexical and phonological errors). In addition to providing correction, recasts also serve important communicative function in classroom discourse by 1) maintaining the flow of communication and keeping students' attention focused on content; 2) scaffolding students as they formulate utterances that require communicative abilities beyond their current proficiency level (Lyster, 1998b, 2002).

In spite of the tendency for most teachers to recast students' errors, there seems to be a potential mismatch between the teacher's intent and students' perception of recasts. Students are often found to misinterpret the corrective purpose behind recasts, taking them instead to have a

communicative purpose. Chaudron (1988) developed a structural model to describe different types and features of a teacher's reactions to students' errors. Among various types of repetitions (repetitions with and without change, repetitions with and without emphasis, repetitions with and without reduction), those with change only (yet no emphasis or reduction) were thought to be the least effective in guiding the learner towards desired performance because they failed to isolate the nature of an error. Though Chaudron used the term "repetitions with change only" (p. 41), Lyster and Ranta (1997) categorized recasts as belonging to this category. The negative evidence entailed in recasts may not be salient enough for learners to recognize *an* error and/or locate *the* error. While the teacher intends to make a correction and assumes that this corrective intent is automatically perceived, the student might fail to perceive it altogether or perceive it as something else.

Lyster's (1998b) study further shed light on why and how recasts may be misperceived by students. He categorized recasts and repetition based on whether they were declarative or interrogative, and whether they were isolated or incorporated. Besides fulfilling a primary corrective function, recasts were found to fulfill four communicative functions at the same time. When they were declarative, they could either provide confirmation or additional information; when they were interrogative, they could either seek confirmation or additional information. Strikingly, there was an identical distribution of these four functions among non-corrective repetition given by the teachers, which led Lyster to conclude that "the corrective reformulations entailed in recasts might be easily overridden by their functional properties in meaning-oriented classrooms" (p. 51). Recasts often fail to draw attention to form possibly because they appear to function as non-corrective repetition by responding to the content or veracity of students' messages, along with a large amount of topic-continuation moves initiated by teachers.

Learners have also been found to perceive recasts variably depending on linguistic targets. Mackey et al. (2000) investigated the extent to which students recognized feedback (including recasts) and whether they recognized it as intended. Two groups of learners (ESL and Italian as a foreign language) participated in a spot-the-difference task and stimulated recalls. The results showed a greater likelihood for the learners to recognize phonological and lexical feedback than morphosyntactic feedback. Interestingly, 75% of the corrective feedback after morphosyntactic errors was given in the form of recasts. Similar findings have been reported across different instructional settings. For example, Korean EFL learners (Kim and Han, 2007) and French ESL learners (Trofimovich et al, 2007) were more likely to notice recasts targeting lexical errors (i.e., perceiving recasts as focusing on wrong vocabulary) than those targeting morphosyntatic errors.

The discrepancy between the teacher's intent and students' interpretation of recasts can be avoided by some techniques. Besides adding some salience-characteristics to highlight the corrective entailment of recasts (as mentioned in Modified Output section above), combining feedback moves can also make recasts more noticeable to students. In Doughty and Varela's (1998) experimental study in two multi-level ESL classrooms, they targeted students' oral production of the simple past and employed a special feedback technique called "corrective recasting", which combined two types of corrective feedback: repetition followed by recast (e.g., S: I wake up early today. T: You wake up early? S: Yeah, wake up at 6. T: Woke up at 6.) First, the teacher repeated the students' non-target utterances with stress and rising intonation to signal the errors, and second, if the student failed to modify his or her output, the teacher provided a recast in which the reformulation of the trouble source was stressed. The experimental class that received this double-feedback move was found to benefit in both short- and long-term compared

to the control class that received no feedback. Notably, in the feedback class, "students were beginning to self-correct before the teacher had the opportunity to recast" (p. 135). Doughty and Varela credited it partially to the teacher's consistent, systematic use of corrective recasting to provide corrective feedback. The teacher's non-verbal cues also enhanced the corrective entailment of the feedback, telling the students that it was the form and not the meaning of their utterance that was in focus.

As mentioned above, recasts, which entail negative evidence, are often misinterpreted as responses to comments or alternatives to the student's original utterances. In those cases, the corrective function of recasts is undermined by the communicative function of many non-corrective repetitions. However, Mackey et al (2000) have suggested that the learner's failure to notice the negative evidence in recasts may not necessarily imply that the learners benefit little from the recasts. Leeman (2003) has attributed the effect of recasts to its enhanced salience of target forms. It might be the case that recasts can still serve to facilitate the learning of new forms regardless of whether they are interpreted as corrective or not by learners.

Corrective Feedback across Instructional Settings

The effectiveness of corrective feedback is found to vary across a range of instructional settings. As Nicholas et al. (2001) and Sheen (2004) have proposed, recasts seem to be more effective in inviting modified output in contexts with a language-focused orientation, for example, the adult ESL classes described by Ellis et al. (2001), and less effective in content-focused classrooms, for example, French immersion classes in Quebec (Lyster, 1998b). Along the same line of instructional context research, Lyster and Mori (2006) examined the distribution and effectiveness of prompts, recasts and explicit correction across two settings: French

immersion for English-speaking children in Canada (FI) and Japanese immersion for English-speaking children in the United States (JI). The teachers from these two immersion classrooms differed in their preferences for corrective feedback; with prompts being the dominant feedback moves in FI and recasts in JI (explicit correction was found to be least frequent in both). By examining the students' immediate responses to the teacher's feedback, they found a striking difference in the effects of recasts: in JI, 72 % of recasts were followed by uptake (including 50% repairs); in FI, on the contrary, only 32% of recasts led to uptake (including 13% repairs). Lyster and Mori furthered coded and identified the similarities and differences in instructional variables across the two settings in terms of communicative orientation to language teaching. They detected an emphasis in JI classrooms on accurate oral production as reflected by choral repetition and reading aloud—activities that were unique to JI classrooms. Their conclusion was that recasts, as implicit feedback contingent upon meaning, benefited learners most in classrooms oriented to form and accuracy. In contrast, prompts were more effective in communication-based classrooms where opportunities to practice with the form were limited. Based on those results, Lyster and Mori introduced the counterbalance hypothesis:

> Instructional activities and interactional feedback that act as a counterbalance to a classroom's predominant communicative orientation are likely to prove more effective than instructional activities and interactional feedback that are congruent with its predominant communicative orientation. (p. 294)

Yang (2009), adopting the coding scheme from Lyster and Mori (2006), examined corrective feedback patterns in three Chinese secondary EFL classes. All three teachers were native speakers of Mandarin Chinese. Though the textbook and curriculum were based on the communicative approach, the classes were categorized as form-focused because a substantial

proportion of time was spent on choral repetition and whole-class activities. The students seldom had the opportunity to interact in pairs or groups due to the large class size (approximately of 60 students) and the dominance of teacher talk. One striking finding was that the three teachers showed a unanimous preference for prompts, which contrasted with the dominance of recasts in other classroom contexts previously reported. Another surprising finding was that the repair rate after corrective feedback was as high as 75%, which was claimed to be higher than the repair rates reported elsewhere. It was speculated that the prominence of the language focus and the minimal opportunities for interaction in class made corrective feedback, especially recasts, more salient to the students. Overall, recasts invited less uptake and repair than prompts, but Yang cautioned about devaluing the effectiveness of the recasts. A post-hoc analysis revealed that most of the recasts were followed by teacher-initiated topic continuation, thus leaving students no opportunity to uptake. When recasts were not followed by topic continuation, they all led to successful repair.

Other scholars have examined the mediating effect of interactional contexts on learners' reactions to corrective feedback within an instructional setting. Li (2010) has speculated that corrective feedback is often not directed to individual learners in classroom-based or group-based contexts (in contrast to one-to-one laboratory contexts), so students may not be able to recognize corrective feedback, especially those implicit types. This is in line with Sheen's (2004) postulation that recasts may be more salient and thus more likely to invite modified output in a small class than a big one.

Purpose of the Present Study

Classroom-based observational research has revealed that a) teachers use a variety of corrective feedback types to draw learners' attention to form, and recasts are the teachers' preferred option; b) prompts are generally more explicit and thus more likely to trigger modified output than recasts, but the corrective salience of recasts can be enhanced by a range of characteristics (e.g., reduction and stress) and techniques (used in tandem with prompts); c) the success of learners noticing feedback and/or modifying output varies according to a number of factors such as learner individual differences, linguistic targets and instructional settings. In the case of recasts, most success seems to be reserved for learners at an advanced developmental level, for recasts targeting lexical and phonological errors, and for learners studying in form-focused classroom context.

The aim of this study was to describe and analyze my own corrective feedback in class, involving its relationship with students' responses. With respect to recasts, especially, I hypothesized that they would elicit more uptake moves in meaningful activities than communicative activities, according to the counterbalance theory that predicts recasts to be effective in inviting uptake in form-focused contexts. In addition, my recasts might not always be error-free in spite of their corrective function. Studying my own error patterns may give me a better knowledge of my interlanguage and a deeper understanding of how students might be affected as shown in their immediate output after my errors. The current study extends previous research and increases our knowledge of error correction in two ways. First, it seeks to investigate a different teaching context from the integrated, content-based ESL/EFL or immersion classes documented in most previous literature. Second, it seeks to evaluate the

grammaticality of my recasts as a non-native English speaking teacher to students' oral errors, and how students react to errors in my recasts. My research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What corrective feedback do I provide after students' non-target utterances in an ESL grammar class? Are certain feedback types more effective than others in inviting modified output?

2. What types of responses do students produce to my recasts in meaningful and communicative activities?

3. Are my recasts to students' errors grammatical? If not, how do students respond to them?

Method

Participants

I chose to examine how I provided corrective feedback after students' non-target utterances and the grammaticality of my responses to students in an ESL grammar course that I taught during the period of the study. A total of 14 students (13 full-time and 1 part-time) were enrolled in this class in an intensive English Language Program at a large U.S. research university. They represented 4 native languages: 1 Vietnamese speaker, 2 Korean speakers, 4 Chinese native language users and 7 Arabic native language users. The majority of students fell in the age range from early-twenties to mid-thirties, except one in his late forties. They all tested into level one, an equivalent to high-beginning proficiency, according to their performance a standardized placement test administered by the program before the start of the semester.

Lesson Components

The course met five days a week for 50 minutes each time. It was designed to be more form-focused than the other two courses taken by the 13 full-time students, Reading and Composition, and Oral Skills. While those two courses incorporated instruction on grammar only as a supplementary component to the four modalities, namely, reading, writing, speaking, and listening, the grammar course I taught featured explicit presentation of rules along with controlled, guided and communicative practice activities. The text for the course, *Grammar Sense 1*, was sequenced according to grammatical form, from most basic structures (for example, the *Be* verb) to more difficult ones (like infinitives and gerunds). A typical lesson started with some warm-up discussions relevant to the topic of the unit or students' recent activities, and proceeded with a short reading passage that contextualized the grammar point. Then, students were asked to identify and analyze the target form in the reading before I explained it. After that, they usually practiced with the structure in pairs, in groups or as a whole class. From mechanical, meaningful, to communicative activities, the target grammar was introduced and practiced in two class periods on average. At the end of two class sessions, students were expected to be able to identify the form, articulate the rules, and use it in both speaking and writing at an emerging level, that is, with the help of the teacher or their peers and with some errors anticipated.

Two 50-minute lessons were audio recorded in the middle of the semester, and approximately 80 minutes of teacher-student interaction were transcribed. The class time I did not transcribe was either spent on individual seat work or lost in transitions between activities (e.g., handing back homework, 'travelling' back and forth to exchange partners). The target grammar point of both lessons was the present continuous verb tense (referred to also as "present progressive" hereafter), including its use in formulating affirmative/negative statements,

"yes/no" and information questions, adding the "ing" ending to verbs in the base form, and using the tense to relate ongoing and recent events.

Categorization of Class Activities

Both lessons were heavily focused on form, but some activities within each lesson were more oriented to the negotiation of meaning. I classified all the transcribed classroom activities into mechanical, meaningful, or communicative practice activities (Richards, 2006, p. 16).

1) In mechanical practice, content is strictly controlled by the teacher or textbooks, and the activity can be carried out by students without necessarily understanding the language in use. Examples would be repetition and substitution drills.

2) In meaningful practice, the control of language form still exists but students have to make meaningful choices during the practice. An example would be a map-reading task that requires students to locate different buildings with a list of prepositions (where, prepositions of location are the target grammar item), or a question-answer activity where students are required to use complete sentences in their responses.

3) Communicative practice asks students to communicate their own information in an activity that controls content, but doesn't require the use of the target form. Students are free to choose their own information and grammatical form in the process of communication, so their language output cannot be precisely predicted.

Since the current study concerned teacher-student interaction, *mechanical activities* (for example, students reading aloud a conversation in the text) were not included in the analysis; only *meaningful* and *communicative activities* in my lessons were the focus of study. *Meaningful*

activities included teacher-student modeling of an activity, teacher-guided drills, whole-class Charades[1]. The purpose was to lead students to recognize, understand, summarize and require them to produce the target form, namely, the full form of the present continuous. Though students might still incorporate other structures during these activities, their attention was oriented to the target form by me or the text. The *communicative activities* were typically open-ended discussions where students exchanged opinions or information with a partner, in groups, or as a whole class. Sometimes, the topics were tailored in advance so that they would stimulate or require the use of the present continuous, but in communicative activities the emphasis was no longer restricted to the target grammar alone. The students' language output was not totally predictable as real information was being exchanged. *Communicative activities* in my lessons included: a) warm-up discussions, which were aimed at cultivating an amiable atmosphere to encourage students to participate and prepare them for other activities later on. No emphasis was placed on the target grammar and topics usually varied from lesson to lesson; b) inductive discussions, during which students summarized the "ing" spelling rules from a list of conjugated verbs and supplied more examples for each rule; c) spontaneous discussions in the midst of classroom routines (e.g., checking answers to exercises in the textbook) when students nominated a topic or an idea to share on the spur of the moment; d) prompted discussions, which was a speaking practice after the deductive presentation of the present continuous. Though students usually started the discussion with prompts containing the target structure from the textbook (e.g., "what are you doing these days?" "Are you eating breakfast these days?"), they were allowed and had to integrate their language resources to carry on the conversation

[1] Although Charades involves more open-ended exchanges of meaning than modeling an activity and guided drills, it is categorized as a meaningful activity because it requires the students to make their guesses of an action using the target grammar of the lesson (i.e., the present progressive).

contributing real information. It was possible for students in communicative activities to use the present continuous only once at the beginning in response to the prompt, and continue the interaction without incorporating it again. Prompts in the form of a "yes/no" question were particularly unlikely to lead to any output in the target grammar because the student's response could be as simple as a short answer "yes" or "no".

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data to answer Research Question 1, the data were transcribed; all my corrective feedback moves following student non-target utterances were identified. The constructs "non-target utterance", "corrective feedback", and "modified output" were defined in the following ways.

Non-target Utterances.

A non-target utterance contained one or more errors related to any of these three linguistic features: a) morphosyntax (e.g., plurals, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, auxiliary verb, articles, for example, "he talk"; b) lexis (e.g., choice of word, prepositions, derivational affixes. For example, instead of saying "yesterday", a student used "last day"; c) phonology, for example, mispronouncing "take" for "/ dāk/".

Given the objective of both lessons, which is, the present progressive (referred to interchangeably as present continuous), an extra standard was established for a target-like utterance in all the meaningful activities. Students were required to produce not only a grammatical response but also a complete sentence using the present progressive. In other words, all the three parts of the sentence (*essential elements*) must be present (i.e., a subject, an auxiliary 'am/is/are' in agreement with the subject and a verb ending with 'ing'). Non-target output in this

study, therefore, included both unacceptable utterances with errors aforementioned and ones which contained an incomplete sentence using the present progressive. For instance, a student made a guess in Charades with only one essential element "exercising", while he was supposed to ask a target-like question, "Are you exercising?" The standard was established only in these two lessons where students were formally and initially introduced to the present progressive according to the curriculum of the language program. Nevertheless, they might have learnt about the target grammar in their early years of school, or have been exposed to it informally because of the frequency of its usage out of class. Admittedly, in real communication outside the classroom, it is common to produce sentences using the present progressive with only one or two essential elements defined above. For example, "studying" can be a natural and spontaneous response to the question, "What are you doing?" Following the extra standard of supplying all the three essential elements would result in artificial and stilted speech. For this reason, students might be reluctant to produce target-like speech according to this standard in class. For this reason, this extra standard did not apply to communicative activities.

It was not always clear to the students or an observer whether my response was corrective feedback or not. Sometimes, responses which appeared to be corrective were given for a communicative purpose, especially in whole-class activities with frequent turn-taking and overlapping among students. In my data analysis, I only counted those teacher responses which were intended to be corrective and addressed to a particular student in an interactive context[2].

[2] Below is an example of a teacher response that was not counted as corrective feedback. Student 1 asked a complete question in "Charades", but student 2 had difficulty understanding, so student 2 made a clarification request. I repeated student 1's question to facilitate S2's comprehension, but not to correct his non-target output (missing 2 essential elements).
"S1: Are you starting? S2: Starting? (confused) T: Are you starting?"

Corrective Feedback.

When students failed to provide a target-like utterance, they usually received corrective feedback signaling something they had just said was incorrect. Six types of corrective feedback have been identified by Lyster and Ranta (1997): explicit correction, recast, clarification request, elicitation, metalinguistic clue, and repetition. I found all except for explicit correction in my data analysis, as demonstrated with examples from the current study below.

Explicit correction refers to teacher moves that clearly point out a student's utterance is wrong and include the target form of the non-target utterance. This category did not occur in the current study; the following example was made up. "S: I fix it by myself. T: No, you should say I fixed it by myself."

Recast is operationalized in this study as the target reformulation of all or part of a student's non-target utterance. Some researchers (Doughty & Varela, 1998) have distinguished emphatic recasts (with emphasis or interrogative tone to highlight the error); other (for example, Lyster, 1998b) have distinguished between incorporated recasts (reformulations incorporated into a longer sentence) and isolated recasts (reformulations alone). For example, after a student's utterance, "this weekend, I don't study", I replied, "You didn't study." No such distinctions were made in the current study, but some features, for example, the complexity of certain recasts, were taken into consideration during the qualitative data analysis.

Metalinguistic clue refers to a comment or a question about the form used in the non-target utterance whether involving metalangage or not. For example, "S: Angry? Are you angry? T: Use present progressive, present continuous."

Clarification request indicates the students' utterance has been misunderstood or is incorrect. It could take the form of a question, for instance, "What do you mean?" It could also be an interjection with a rising tone, "Uh?" or a question word, "What?"

Elicitation is defined as an incomplete repetition of a student's non-target utterance with a rising intonation to invite the student to reformulate a specific form; an elicitation might invite the learner to complete a question, as in "F: And he is work at home. T: He is…?"

Repetition refers to my repetition of part or all of a student's non-target utterance verbatim in an interrogative way without providing any reformulation or inviting the student to complete my repetition. For example, "S: Raining. T: Raining?"

Sometimes more than one type of corrective feedback was used in a single turn. In one instance, repetition and clarification request were combined in a single turn (e.g., "H: Prowoking. Are you proworking?" T: "Proworking? What do you mean by proworking?") Researchers have investigated such combinations of corrective feedback types and credited them with being more effective than use of one type alone (see Doughty & Varela, 1998). Since the use of combined feedback types was not the focus of the current study, only the corrective feedback move occurring immediately prior to the student's next turn was counted. In the example above, the corrective feedback type was categorized as a clarification request rather than repetition. This treatment was based on the assumption that the student uptake is primarily responding to the immediately prior corrective feedback move.

Modified Output.

Sometimes, the teacher's corrective feedback, which prompted students to reflect on their ungrammatical production, might lead to a change in student's subsequent output. Following

Mackey et al (2010), I operationalized modified output as "turns where students made partial or complete changes to their original utterances" (p. 510) immediately after a corrective feedback move. Because the current study was conducted in a grammar class, I focused only on modified output that was more target-like than the student's original utterance. I excluded utterances that were produced equally or less target-like than the originals. Modified output could be produced by the direct addressee of the corrective feedback or other students who participated in the interaction. For example, "S: Are you beer? T: Bear? SS: Bear."

To answer Research Question 2, I adopted part of Lyster and Ranta's (1997) error treatment model and adjusted some of their categories to fit my data. An error treatment model involving the use of recasts started with a non-target utterance (trouble source) by the student; then it was followed by a recast from me, possibly leading to a response from the student. Students' responses in the immediate next turn after recasts were categorized as one of the following five types: 1) modified output in the form of exact repetition of my recast, whether the repetition was made by the student who committed the initial error or a peer student who did not commit the initial error. As for complicated recasts (i.e., those that contained corrections of more than one error), uptake included both the student's reformulation of all the errors and partial reformulation of at least one error; 2) other modifications, which referred to a student's response that included a correct form of the initial error without repeating or incorporating the recast; 3) acknowledgement, which referred to a simple reply like "yes" and "yeah"; 4) same error, which referred to a repetition of the student's initial error; 5) topic-continuation, which referred to students' utterances that fell into none of the above categorizes but simply continued the topic of interaction. Not every recast was followed by a student's response. Sometimes, I proceeded with the topic right after my recast without allowing students any opportunities to react. Such teacher

moves were coded as teacher-initiated topic continuation. A summary of student responses and teacher-initiated topic continuation from are presented in Table 1, with examples taken from the transcript of the current study.

Utterances after recasts	Examples
Type 1. Exact repetition	S: Study in campus. T: On campus. S: On campus.
Type 2. Other modifications	S: Like "/ dāk/"? T: Date? S: Take.
Type 3. Acknowledgement	S: No, but I'm exercising my home. T: Okay, you are working out at home? S: Yeah.
Type 4. Same error	S: /ðisis/ year. T: This what? S: /ðisis/ years.
Type 5. Student-initiated topic continuation	S: You drunk? T: Are you drunk? S: No, oh yes. (laughing)
Type 6. Teacher-initiated topic continuation	S: And eating together. T: Oh, so they are eating together. What about you? Are you studying very hard?

Table 1. Six types of utterances after recasts

For Research Question 3, all my recasts to students' non-target utterances, which had already been identified to answer Research Question 1 and 2, were coded by me and a native speaker of English separately. These recasts were coded by both of us as either grammatical or

ungrammatical, where ungrammatical recasts could contain morphosyntactic, lexical, and/or phonological errors. Inter-rater reliability on our coding was very good. All of my ungrammatical recasts that I identified after students' non-target utterances were also identified by the native speaker as well; in addition, the native speaker located one erroneous recast that I did not, "Student: /ðisis/ year. T: This what?" After discussions, we agreed that this recast served as a clarification request because I remember I did not hear the student's message clearly. Though it appeared to be an ungrammatical recast, it was not counted as such because it fulfilled an extra communicative function in addition to its corrective function.

Results

Research Question One: What corrective feedback do I provide after students' non-target utterances in an ESL grammar class? Are certain feedback types more effective than others in inviting modified output?

The distribution of corrective feedback moves and student's modified output is presented in Table 2 and Figure 1. The majority (64%) of my 47 corrective feedback moves after students' non-target utterances were recasts. This teacher preference for recasts is consistent with reported findings in the literature. Metalinguistic clues and clarification requests were next most frequent (6 for each, for 12% each). There were also 3 repetitions (10%) and only 1 elicitation (2%). No explicit correction was found in spite of the form-focused orientation of the lessons.

With respect to students' responses to my corrective feedback moves, modified output followed 36% of all my corrective feedback. Following my 31 recasts, there was only 32% modified output. Modified output was higher in response to other types of corrective feedback; following my 6 metalinguistic clues, 4 student responses (67%) contained modified output and

my 3 repetitions resulted in 2 cases of modified output (67%). My one elicitation led to modified output by the student but my 6 clarification requests led to absolutely no modified output.

Types of corrective feedback (N=47 feedback moves)	Individual feedback type/total corrective feedback	Students' modified output/ individual feedback type
Type 1. Explicit correction	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Type 2. Recast	31/47 (64%)	10/31 (32%)
Type 3. Metalinguistic clue	6/47 (12%)	4/6 (67%)
Type 4. Clarification request	6/47 (12%)	0 (0%)
Type 5. Elicitation	1/47 (2%)	1/1 (100%)
Type 6. Repetition	3/47 (10%)	2/3 (67%)
Total	47 (100%)	17 (36%)

Table 2 Distribution of my corrective feedback and student's modified output

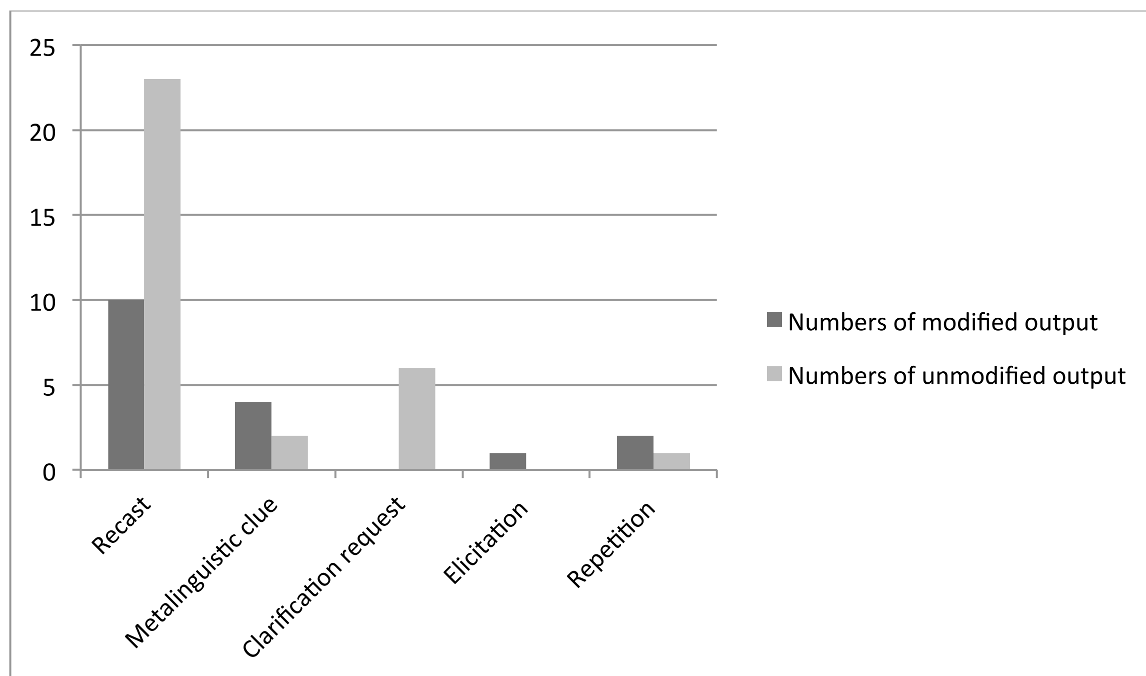

Figure 1. Distribution of student's modified and unmodified output after corrective feedback (results shown in raw numbers)

So to answer Research Question 1, although recasts were by far my preferred method of providing corrective feedback, only 32% of my recasts led to modified output by students, which was in line with many previous studies that reported low effectiveness of recasts in generating modified output. I used other types of feedback at a much lower rate than recasts. Among those less frequent feedback types, clarification requests were ineffective; none of them led to modified output. Other types of corrective feedback I provided seemed to be more successful in producing students' modified output; most metalinguistic cues and repetition were effective (67% for each). I used elicitation only once, and it led to modified output successfully. However, there were very few of these provided, so their impact on modified output requires more data. Examples of each corrective feedback move and students' responses will be presented as below.

Modified Output Following Teacher's Recasts.

As reported above, in responding to students' non-target utterances, I provided a total of 31 recasts, 10 (32%) of which were followed by modified output. Of these cases of modified output, eight (26%) instances of modified output occurred in the form of uptake, while the remaining two (6%) occurred in another form that was more target-like than the originals. These examples of modified output following recasts will be analyzed in detail in the findings of this study on Research Question 2.

Modified Output Following Metalinguistic Clues.

All six metalinguistic clues I provided to students were given after students' non-target guesses in the Charades activity. When students left out any of the essential sentence elements in using present progressive or failed to formulate their guesses using present progressive at all, I almost always provided feedback with metalinguistic clues. Four (67%) of these were followed

by students' modified output (*Example 1*), and 2 (33%) were followed with topic continuation initiated by other students who were flooding the student who was holding the floor with more guesses or requests for hints (*Example 2*).

Example 1

1) S1: Asking.

2) T: Ask the full sentence.

3) S2: Are you asking?

Example 2

1) S1: Are you angry?

2) T: Present continuous. Use a verb.

3) S2: What's the first letter?

Modified Output following Clarification Requests.

The six teacher clarification requests produced no modified output—instead, student repeated part or all of the ill-formed utterance. This occurred regardless of the nature of the error (4 lexical, 1 phonological, and 1 syntactical). Not surprisingly, clarification requests were always followed by a second corrective feedback move, either of the same type or a different one, in the teacher's next turn.

Example 3

1) U: My wife, she is help me. (laughing)

2) T: Sh, she what?

3) U: She + what, help me? (not clear)

4) T: She doesn't help you? She is not good at that.

5) U: No, but she's take care ++ of my + daughter.

In line 1) of Example 3 above, student U produced an ill-formed statement that contained a wrong auxiliary "is" in front of a base form verb "help". In line 2), I made a clarification request. In line 3), the student repeated not only my corrective feedback but also part of his erroneous utterance with a rising tone: "help me?" It was unclear whether my clarification request caused any comprehension difficulty to him, but it appeared that he interpreted it as a response to the content of his message. Possibly, he had trouble with self-modification of the error. In line 4), I recasted his utterance, assuming that he meant to produce a negative statement. In line 5), the student continued the topic, and made another error. There was no uptake on my recast.

Modified Output Following Repetitions.

All three repetitions were offered after lexical or phonological errors and two repetitions led to modified output. These repetition episodes all occurred when students were engaged in discovering grammar rules inductively with a partner or as a whole class. They had to brainstorm lists of verbs that followed a specific spelling rule to conjugate into the "ing" form.

Example 4

1) E: Raining.

2) T: Raining?

3) S: Running.

In Example 4, when asked about a verb which doubles the final letter before taking "ing", in line 1) student E gave a wrong answer, "raining". In line 2), I offered a repetition with rising intonation to question his answer and indicate the mistake. In line 3), student S jumped in to give the right answer without letting E to respond.

Example 5

1) S: Another word, like dry?

2) T: Dry?

3) S: Dry, drying, not same like, it's eh drive.

In line 1), the student attempted to give an example of "dry" as a word that dropped the final "e" before adding "ing". In line 2), I provided him with a repetition with rising intonation. In line 3), he first repeated his erroneous answer, and then repeated it using its "ing" form. Then he negated his original example, and replaced it with a correct one, "drive". My repetition not only highlighted the trouble source but also provided scaffolding to the student without which he would have been unlikely to notice the error.

Example 6

1) L: /hæi/, / hæi/.

2) T: / hæi/?

3) L: H-i-e, /hæing/.

Example 6 took place immediately after Example 5. In line 1), Student L's answer, "/hæi/", was non-target because it sounded like "hi" or "high", neither of which was a verb. In line 2), I repeated his answer with rising intonation. In line 3), he spelled the word aloud, and pronounced its conjugated form. It was unclear whether the corrective purpose behind my

repetition was evident to the student, or whether he misinterpreted it as a confirmation check. However, at least he seemed to recognize that his answer was causing some comprehension difficulty to me, as implied from his effort to spell the word aloud to help me understand. Obviously, he coined a new word to conform to the spelling rule that required the replacement of "ie" in the final ending with "y" before "ing".

Modified Output Following Elicitations.

The only elicitation in both lessons is shown in Example 7.

Example 7

1) F: And he is work at home.

2) T: He is …?

3) F: Working at home.

In line 1), the student used the base form of the verb after the auxiliary "is". In line 2), I used an elicitation to invite him to reformulate the non-target utterance by completing the sentence. In line 3), the student conjugated the base verb correctly, but he did not incorporate the correction into a complete sentence using the present continuous. In other words, his modified output still did not meet the requirement for this activity. Admittedly, the structure of elicitation, which repeated the well-formed part of an utterance but left out the ill-formed part to be reformulated, might make it unnecessary, in the student's mind, to produce a complete sentence, since between the two of us what we had co-constructed was a complete sentence.

Research Question Two: What types of responses do students produce after my recasts in meaningful and communicative activities?

To answer the second Research Question, a comparison between students' responses after recasts in meaningful activities and students' responses after recasts in communicative activities was made, as displayed in Table 3 and graphically in Figure 2. Based on previous research, I had anticipated that there would be more "exact repetition" after my recasts in meaningful activities than in communicative activities.

Types of utterances after recasts (N=31 recasts)	Types of activities	
	Meaningful (14 recasts)	Communicative (17 recasts)
Type 1. Exact repetition	3 (22%)	5 (29%)
Type 2. Other modifications	2 (14%)	0 (0%)
Type 3. Acknowledgement	2 (14%)	0 (0%)
Type 4. Same error	1 (7%)	1 (6%)
Type 5. Student-initiated topic continuation	2 (14%)	6 (35%)
Type 6. Teacher-initiated topic continuation	4 (29%)	5 (29%)
Total	14 (100%)	17 (100%)

Table 3. Six types of utterances after recasts in meaningful and communicative activities

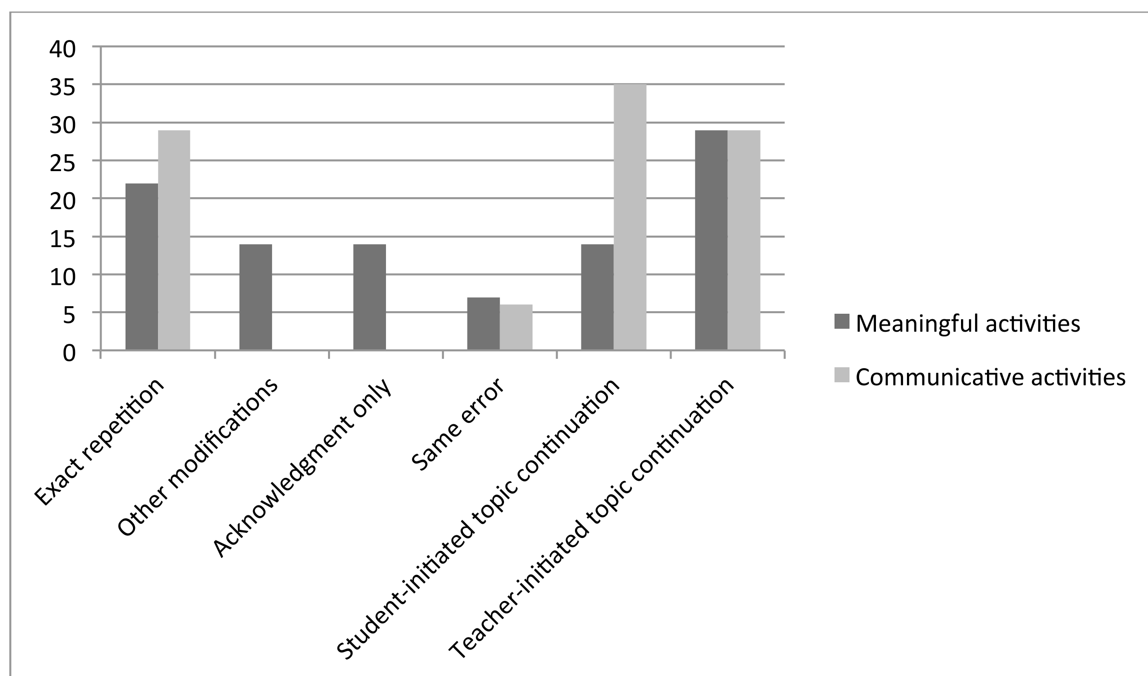

Figure 2. Distribution of six types of utterances after recasts in meaningful and communicative activities (results shown in percentage)

Results showed that, contrary to my expectations, there was basically a similar proportion of "exact repetition" following my recasts in meaningful activities and in communicative activities (at 22% and 29% respectively, with recasts producing only a little more 'exact repetition' in communicative activities). Type of activity did not seem to affect student uptake following my recasts. Type of activity did seem to affect other ways students responded to my recasts: students-initiated topic continuation occurred more often after recasts in communicative activities (35%) than in meaningful activities (14%), while "other modifications" and "acknowledgement" occurred after my recasts in meaningful activities (14% each), but never occurred after my recasts in communicative activities. "Same error" was made equally infrequently in both types of activities (at 7% and 6% respectively). Note that teacher-initiated topic continuation was also included in the analysis because these teacher moves denied students opportunities to respond to my recasts. I did not expect myself to produce much topic-continuation, especially in meaningful activities. But results showed that I initiated topic-

continuation equally in meaningful and communicative activities (at 29% for each), which means that students were prevented from producing “exact repetition” similarly in both activities. Again, one needs to view these results with caution because the numbers of these responses were too low to support any statistic claims. In order to better understand the results presented above, I will examine in more depth how students responded to my recasts in meaningful activities and communicative activities.

Exact Repetition.

In meaningful activities, “exact repetition” occurred three times, and all of them were complete repetitions of my recasts. Example 8 demonstrates the way an “exact repetition” occurred following a recast in a meaningful activity, “Charades”. Students took turns to act out a verb from a pool of vocabulary words prepared for them in advance, and the rest of the class were required to guess the action being nonverbally displayed by asking a question using the present progressive. The expectation for them was to produce a complete sentence, with the three essential elements of the present continuous in the interrogative order (i.e., the auxiliary “are”, the subject “you” and a verb conjugated in “ing”).

Example 8 Complete repetition, meaningful activity, lesson one

1) B: Talking?
2) T: Ask the full sentence. Are you talking?
3) B: (Are you talking?)
4) S: (Lying).

In line 1), student B made a guess using only one essential element of the target grammar, “talking”. In line 2), I first offered a metalinguistic clue and then recast her non-target utterance.

In line 3), B repeated my recast, and in line 4) student S overlapped with another non-target utterance missing the same essential elements as in line 1). To student B, the corrective entailment in the recast might be made obvious by the metalinguistic clue prior to it. But to student S, the recast did not take effect either because he was not the direct addressee of the recast, or because he focused more on conveying the semantic meaning of the lexical word.

Example 9 to 10 show two partial repetitions produced by one student, “U”, in a communicative activity. Interestingly, these moves revealed that U had a tendency to produce repetition in tandem with an acknowledgement “yeah”, and to omit subject pronouns in his repetition.

Example 9 Partial repetition, communicative activity, lesson two

1) U: No, but she’s take care ++ of my + daughter.
2) T: Ah, she is taking care.
3) U: Yeah, taking care of my daughter.

In line 3), there was not only a confirmation, “yeah”, on the content of my recast, but also partial repetition from the student. He repeated only the part of my recast that was exactly the trouble source in line 1), and omitted the subject pronoun. According to the requirement to use the present continuous in complete sentences in the lessons, his repetition could still be considered incorrect. However, he seemed to have taken up the part of the recast targeting the unconjugated verb “take”.

Example 10 Partial repetition, communicative activity, lesson two

1) U: Yeah. This weekend I don't study.

2) T: You didn't study.

3) U: Yeah, didn't study, because I bought some furniture.

In line 3), U again confirmed my understanding with a "yeah", and then repeated the past tense verb but again omitted the subject pronoun; in the same turn, he continued the topic by adding more details. Taken together, Examples 9 and 10 suggest that U had trouble using subject pronouns, especially third person singular pronouns. Example 11 below shows again U's difficulty with subject pronouns, but this time it leads to some lack of clarity requiring my clarification request.

Example 11 Partial repetition, communicative activity, lesson two

1) U: He is cooking seven, eh, he is cooking seven, seven eh chicken. And because you have a big party.

2) T: Because what?

3) U: You have, you have big party.

4) T: He had a big party.

5) U: Yeah. He?

6) T: He.

7) U: He has, he has big party.

In line 1), U correctly referred to his roommate twice using a third person pronoun 'he', but the third time he chose an incorrect subject pronoun, "you", and the base form verb, "have". In line 2) I made a clarification request targeting the erroneous subject pronoun. In line 3), he

made the same error. In line 4), I offered a complete recast including three changes different from his original utterance: replacing the second person subject pronoun with "he", conjugating the base verb into the past tense "had", and supplying a missing article "a". In line 5), the student first acknowledged my recast, "yeah", and then he seemed to detect *a* difference – or partial gap – between his utterance and mine, "He?" The rising tone reveals a possible internal process of hypothesis-testing. In line 6), I confirmed his repetition, and the student incorporated the correct subject pronoun in line 7). Examples 9 to 11 show how I became aware over a series of recast moves of one student's pattern of difficulty with third person singular subject pronouns, and through a combination of clarification request and recast, succeeded in getting the student to notice the feedback and take it up.

Compared to morphological and syntactic recasts, lexical and phonological recasts tended to be taken up more frequently. Example 12 presents a complete repetition after a recast targeting a phonological error. The whole class was talking about dieting habits in winter.

Example 12 Repetition of phonological recast, spontaneous discussion, lesson one

1) H: Are you beer?

2) T: Uh?

3) H: Are you beer?

4) T: Bear?

5) SS: Bear.

6) H: Yeah.

Other Modifications.

Meaningful activities produced more "other modifications" than communicative activities (2 versus 0). In these two cases, students did not exactly repeat my recasts, but they modified their output in a target-like direction (Example 13). Students seemed to be more attentive to form, and could even recognize the error in my responses (Example 14). In Example 13, students had been asked to give an example following the spelling rule that requires the deletion of "e" in the final ending position before adding "ing" to the verb.

Example 13 Other modifications, meaningful activities, lesson one

1) S: Like ++ \ˈdāk\?

2) T: Date?

3) S: Take.

In line 2), I offered a recast with rising intonation, which could also serve as a confirmation check. In line 3), the student disconfirmed my reformulation and offered a different word, "take". His successful self-reformulation was evident of the facilitative role of the recast. Though it led to no immediate uptake, it provided the student with the scaffolding he needed to notice the meaning-pronunciation mismatch and ultimately produce the correct word.

Example 14 Other modifications, meaningful activities, lesson one

1) T: What is your wife doing?

2) A: Just studying, just trying at home.

3) T: He is studying?

4) A: She is.

5) T: Eh, eh, sorry!

6) A: I'm he. (laughing)

7) T: She is studying. Where is she studying now?

8) A: St. Paul campus.

Example 14 occurred in a teacher-guided drill of the present continuous at the beginning of lesson one. In line 2), student A responded to my line 1) question in a non-target manner, leaving out the subject "she" and the auxiliary "is". In line 3) I recast his utterance as a complete sentence with rising intonation but my recast contained a gender error in the subject pronoun, "he". In line 4) the student recast the gender error in my utterance in return. Next in line 5), I apologized, and in line 6) he continued to correct me explicitly, "I'm he." In line 7), I responded with a complete sentence that also repeated his correction on the gender of the subject. In the same turn, I continued with another question without allowing the student an opportunity to respond to my repetition. In line 8), he answered that question, but did not use either a complete sentence or the present continuous.

Acknowledgement.

Students produced more "acknowledgment" after recasts in meaningful activities than in communicative activities though the number of cases was small (2 versus 0). In both cases though students did not show repetition in the very next turn after the recast, they demonstrated delayed modified output. Example 15 appeared in the same discussion as Example 13. The student was asked to think of an example that drops the final "e" before taking "ing'.

Example 15 Acknowledgement, meaningful activities, lesson one

1) S: \ˈdrīfu\?

2) T: Driving.

3) S: Yeah.

Though there was no incorporation of my correction in this episode, the student demonstrated delayed modified output as he articulated the correct form, "driving" in the whole-class debrief later in the lesson. This suggested that he may have internalized my recast in spite of the absence of immediate modified output (Mackey & Philip, 1998; McDonald, 2006).

Same Error.

"Same error" responses occurred only once in each meaningful and communicative activity. In the context of meaningful activity (Example 16), the whole class was brainstorming a time expression that could be used to refer to a longer duration.

Example 16 Same error, meaningful activities, lesson two

1) U: /ðisis/ year.

2) T: This what?

3) U: /ðisis/ years.

4) T: This year. Okay? What else?

In line 1), student U produced a demonstrative pronoun and a noun in his answer. The former was pronounced incorrectly while the latter created a problem in listening comprehension for me (the word "year" was added afterwards during the transcription of the audio). In line 2), I recast the phonological error based on the assumption that he meant to say "this", and made a

clarification request about the word I did not understand. Line 3) contains an interesting modification of output. U first repeated the same error, "/ðisis/", and then modified the singular noun to its plural form, "years". Possibly, he did not realize his pronunciation was problematic and ignored my recast. At the same time, he interpreted my clarification request as corrective feedback and identified the singular noun, "year", as the trouble source. In line 4), I provided a complicated recast which contained corrections in two areas: one on the same demonstrative pronoun (phonological error), and the other on the plurality of the noun (morphological error). There was no uptake and I continued the topic.

A post-hoc analysis reveals that my interpretation of the ill-pronounced word, /ðisis/, may have deviated from U's intended word. From the response in line 3), he was very likely to be trying to produce a plural phrase, "these years". However, I rendered a different diagnosis of the error in line 4), assuming what he said was "this is", and thus changed the semantic meaning of his problematic utterance (from "these" to "this"), rather than correcting the erroneous pronunciation in the direction of student's intention, "these". Moreover, in line 4), U's modified output (i.e., his uptake on my clarification request, which was intended to be communicative instead of corrective) was reformulated in the reverse, from "years" to "year". If it was true that what he meant to say was "these years", then he received little systematic corrective feedback on the pronunciation he had problems with. It's worthwhile to point out that even though no uptake was transcribed here, an unclear phrase, which sounded like it could have been "this year", was audio-taped in the recording; this would suggest that U was making an effort to imitate my recast. If so, his production of this same error might be due to his failure to notice the recast and to the fact that my recast changed his intended meaning and contained correction not targeting the problematic pronunciation of "these".

Topic Continuation.

Students initiated considerably more topic-continuation moves in communicative activities (35%) than in meaningful activities (14%). Surprisingly, peer-initiated topic continuation accounted for the majority of total topic continuation (2 out of 2 in meaningful activities and 5 out of 6 in communicative activities). The direct addressee of the recast (i.e., the student whose utterances contained a trouble source that triggered the recast) usually had no opportunity to comment on the recast before another student participating in the group discussion would take over the floor. Example 17 shows one of the two student-initiated topic continuations in meaningful activities.

Example 17 Peer-initiated topic continuation, meaningful activities, lesson one

1) S1: Competing.

2) T: Are you competing?

3) S2: Conversation?

4) S3 (the performer): Similar to complain.

In line 1), student 1 made a guess that contained only one essential element, so in line 2) I provided a recast using the complete form. However, in line 3) student 2 chimed in with another non-target utterance and in line 4) student 3 continued with the game by responding to the content of the guess. It remained unclear whether student 1 recognized the corrective purpose of my recast or not.

As in meaningful activities, students also produced topic-continuation frequently in communicative activities. Example 18 and 19 below took place in a spontaneous discussion

about the amount of sleep students had had the night before. Students were actively participating in the interaction.

Example 18 Peer-initiated topic continuation, communicative activities, lesson two

1) S: You drunk?
2) T: Are you drunk?
3) J: No, oh yes. (laughing)
4) S: Cause you don't remember!

Example 19 Peer-initiated topic continuation, communicative activities, lesson two

1) N: Maybe in the day, he work very hard, and he's very feel tired.
2) T: He feels very tired.
3) N: Yeah, in the night he—
4) E: —somebody, if feel tired, he doesn't want to go out.

In Example 19, I gave a recast of the second part of N's utterance line 2). Then in line 3), student N was proceeding with his response, but in line 4) student E took over the floor and seemed to complete N's sentence. As a result, student N, as the direct addressee of the recast, had no opportunity for uptake. Student E's unexpected answer, however, seemed to show some effect of the recast.

Different from the topic continuation in Examples 17 to 19, the student-initiated topic-continuation move in Example 20 exemplified grammatical use of the linguistic feature targeted by my recast. It happened in a warm-up discussion about weather. Student A mentioned Korean military service, and I invited him to share more details.

Example 20 Peer-initiated topic continuation, warm-up discussion, lesson two

1) A: This is Korean guys to teach. They have to three years military service.
2) T: Three years. Those Korean men need to work for, serve the army for three years.
3) J: Three year?
4) T: Three years?
5) A: Now it's two years.
6) T: Okay, so only two years.
7) A: Yes.
8) J: Eh, two years, but now it's one year (interrupted by A), one year eight month.

In line 1), student A produced two utterances containing more than one error. In line 2), I provided a complicated recast which reformulated his whole turn into one sentence. In line 3), student J (also from Korea) jumped in to again confirm understanding with "Three year?" leaving no opportunity for uptake on the part of A. Thus, it was unclear whether my recast was interpreted as corrective feedback or just an alternative to express the same meaning. J's question in line 3) was ungrammatical because it omitted the plural marker "s". In line 4), I provided him with a recast, "Three years?" In line 5), A took the floor before J had time to respond to my recast. Note that A's utterance in line 5) contained the target-like marking of the plural noun "years". Interestingly, in line 8), J took up A's and my phrase correctly, "two years", but failed to mark another plural noun at the end of his turn, "eight month". It was hard to tell whether J had noticed the gap between his utterance in line 3) and my recast in line 4). His grammatical use of "years" in line 8) might be best accounted for by the consecutive occurrences of the target-like model, "years", in line 5) and line 6).

Research Question Three: Are my recasts to students' errors grammatical? If not, how do students respond to them?

Some of my recasts themselves contained grammatical errors. Among 31 recasts, one contained an error in third-person gender pronouns and three others omitted an article before a singular noun or a plural marker "s". Sometimes, the elements of a recast that did not constitute a contrast to a student's original error contained errors; at other times, the corrective element (linguistic elements that contrasted with the student's original errors) was ungrammatical. For most of the time, students did not react to the errors in my recasts but simply acknowledged my responses or continued the topic of the communication. Only in one case did a student correct my error, I discussed this in Example 14 above, which I repeat below for convenience

Example 14 Correction to my ill-formed recast, meaningful activity, lesson one

1) T: What is your wife doing?
2) A: Just studying, just trying at home.
3) T: He is studying?
4) A: She is.
5) T: Eh, eh, sorry!
6) A: I'm he. (laughing)
7) T: She is studying. Where is she studying now?
8) A: St. Paul campus.

In line 3), I recast A's error with rising intonation to elicit more information about his wife's major, but I used the masculine subject pronoun. In line 4), A recast my pronoun error, and in line 5), I apologized. In line 6), he explained the use of "he" with an example. In line 7), I

modified the pronoun in asking a question using the present progressive. In line 8), the student answered with an incomplete sentence, not using the present progressive, which was the focus of the activity.

My embarrassment resulting from A's correction was such that it not only suspended the flow of the ongoing communication (my apology in line 5), but also distracted me from my control of the topic later on. In line 3), before the student's correction, I asked about his wife's major but in line 7) I asked again about where she studied, which had already been stated in line 2), "at home." In spite of that, this episode shows some evidence of the amiable environment in this class where everyone, the teacher and students alike, had an opportunity to learn from the interaction and hold each other accountable for maintaining a target-like standard. Students should not be thought of as passive recipients of corrective feedback. They should be constantly engaged in evaluating the input, not only the content but also the form. When they are capable, in other words, having reached the developmental stage for a given structure, they can and should monitor and correct others, including the teacher.

For the most of the time, however, my students did not point out the errors in my recasts. In Example 21 below, I produced three consecutive responses (including two recasts) that contained the same error.

Example 21 Topic continuation after my ill-formed recast, communicative activity, lesson two

1) T: Are you on a diet?

2) J: I think most girls diet their weight.

3) T: Okay. Are Korean girls on diet?

4) J: No, it's world, all girl.

5) T: All girls go on diet. Ba, are you on diet?

6) B: No.

In line 3), I offered a recast which was incorporated into a longer question. However, the corrective element in my recast contained an error because it left out either the article or the plural marker in the question, "Are Korean girls on diet?" In line 4), J showed no uptake of my recast and continued the topic with an incomplete sentence containing other errors. In the first part of line 5), I provided another recast repeating the same error, mentioning a plural subject but omitting the plural –s on 'diet' (or the article "a"), "all girls go on diet In line 6), B continued the topic with a short answer without demonstrating any uptake. Therefore, no evidence was available to assess the influence of my ill-formed recasts in line 2) and line 4). It might have escaped the students' notice if the students were completely focused on the meaning. However, "on diet" appeared three times within one episode – a frequency of input that was high enough to possibly constitute a negative influence on the student's interlanguage. It is worthwhile to point out that I did supply the article before the singular noun "diet" in line 1). In other words, students were exposed to both target-like and non-target input from me in different turns.

Example 22 shows another ill-formed recast after a students' non-target utterance that lacked an indefinite article "a". My recast in line 3) was followed by an acknowledgement only.

Example 22 Acknowledgement of ill-formed recast, communicative activity, lesson two

1) E: I think film's short, short video?

2) S: Yeah, like short video.

3) T: A film's short video? No, film is British English.

4) E: Ah.

In retrospect, I seemed to be more concerned about negotiating meaning than recasting the students' non-target form during the interaction; in negotiating meaning the absence of articles causes no difficulty in comprehension. It was unclear whether my errors in line 3) influenced the students' subsequent oral production of articles.

The results of this study are now summarized as below.

RQ1: What corrective feedback do I provide after student's non-target utterances in a form-focused class? Are certain feedback types more effective than others in inviting modified output?

1. Recasts were my major corrective feedback type. I also provided metalinguistic clues and clarification requests frequently. I seldom used repetitions or elicitations, and never used explicit corrections.

2. Overall, students modified their output after my corrective feedback only about a third of the time. Elicitation, metalinguistic clues and repetitions were more effective than recasts in eliciting modified output. Clarification requests were the least effective.

RQ2: What types of responses do students provide to my recasts in meaningful and communicative activities?

1. Students produced "exact repetition" after recasts at about the same rate in meaningful and communicative activities.

2. There were more "other modifications" and "acknowledgment" in meaningful activities than in communicative activities, while there were more student-initiated topic continuation in communicative activities than meaningful activities.

RQ3: Are my recasts to students' errors grammatical? If not, how do students respond to them?

1. Some of my recasts contained grammatical errors. I sometimes omitted articles before singular nouns or the final –s on plural nouns. I also mismarked the gender for a third person singular pronoun.

2. Students seldom took up my errors in their immediately subsequent output. Most often, they acknowledged my erroneous responses and/or continued the topic. In one case, a student corrected an error in my recast.

Discussion

My Preference for Recasts as Corrective Feedback

In my lessons, I gave corrective feedback mainly in the form of recasts, followed at a much lower rate by metalinguistic clues and clarification requests. In general, I aimed at cultivating an atmosphere in class where grammar errors would not be considered as stigmas, but rather, as natural products in the process of learning and opportunities for reflection and improvement. I felt that recasts were non-threatening to the students, especially adult learners, and would be unlikely to discourage their future attempts to use the forms or pronounce the words they had problems with.

There might be two reasons for my preference for recasts. First, recasts can convey negative evidence to students in a non-threatening way because they do not require self-repair on the part of students (Schegloff et al., 1977). As Panova and Lyster (2002) have speculated, low-level students' limited linguistic resources "may have predisposed the teacher to focus on means of providing linguistic input via reformulations" (p. 588). I might be inclined to choose recasts

instead of prompts in situations where I decided that a) self-repairing an error would require knowledge beyond the student's current proficiency level; b) even if the student was able to self-repair with some scaffolding from me, the process of self-repair had the potential to disrupt the flow of communication; c) the target-like utterance of a student's error was not a priority according to the objectives of the current lesson.

Secondly, the dominance of recasts might be related to my frequent use of another type of response: non-corrective repetitions. A revisit to the transcript of my data revealed that I often repeated students' error-free utterances. This was so because most students at this level had low proficiency in speaking and listening. I felt it would be helpful to repeat their target-like utterances to make sure the messages were heard and understood properly by me and other students. Possibly, my tendency to use recasts, at least in part, was associated with my inclination to use non-corrective repetitions to facilitate comprehension in teacher-student and student-student communication. The results of the current study showed that the majority of my recasts did not lead to uptake in either meaningful or communicative activities, so I should probably use recasts less often if uptake is a desired outcome. In a 50-minute grammar lesson, it would be unrealistic to require students to self-repair whenever errors occurred. Also, self-repairs require that the students have already mastered the latent knowledge of the targeted linguistic form. However, at this high-beginning level, students might commit errors frequently, and correcting many of them might require competence beyond their proficiency level. Since recasts can signal errors and model exemplars at the same time, it might be more important to increase the salience of recasts than to reduce the number of recasts. I will discuss this later in the section of pedagogical implications.

Variable Effect of Feedback Type on Students' Modified Output

Overall, students modified their output in response to over one third of my corrective feedback. Within each feedback type, there was some variation in the proportion of modified output. The majority of recasts were not as effective in producing uptake as three types of prompts (metalinguistic clues, repetitions and elicitation). Similar results have also occurred in many previous studies (Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Panova and Lyster, 2002; but see also Lowen and Philp, 2006). Most strikingly, none of my clarification requests led to modified output. Most of my clarification requests were followed by students' repetition of their original utterance, which indicated that students were very likely to interpret my clarification requests as conversational moves focused on meaning and not as corrective feedback (Long, 1996).

With respect to recasts, the low rate of modified output might be attributed to the implicit nature of this type of feedback in general. As mentioned above, I also often repeated students' target-like utterances in class, which might exacerbate the ambiguity of recasts from the students' perspective. However, according to the lists of salience-enhancing characteristics proposed by Loewen and Philp (2006) and Sheen (2006), many of my recasts seemed to be relatively explicit because they were short and segmented (Example 9 and 10), targeting phonological error (Example 12 and 13), or accompanied by another prompt (Example 8). Also, most of them were declarative.

It might be that the ineffectiveness of my recasts was not so much a result of implicitness but as a result of classroom dynamics. Most of my recasts were followed by topic continuation, yet a most surprising finding was that only 1 out of 17 topic-continuation was initiated by the direct addressee of the recast. In other words, the majority of topic continuation was other-

initiated, either by me (29%) or by a peer student (23%) I tended to initiate topic continuation frequently, which prevented students from responding to my recasts. Perhaps, at the moment when I decided to continue the topic, I was making an assumption that a) the direct addressee of my recast had already perceived it as corrective; b) the recast was too complicated for the student to repeat or incorporate in their output; or c) the flow of interaction would be interrupted if the target form were to be discussed overtly. Possibly, I was inclined to keep the lessons flowing smoothly, especially under the 50-minute time pressure, at the expense of allowing students sufficient time to modify their output. It is unclear whether students perceived my recasts as corrective or communicative because they usually had no opportunity to respond. I will discuss peer-initiated topic continuation later.

Variable Effect of Activity Type on Students' Responses after Recasts

One might assume that meaningful activities would encourage more exact repetition than communicative activities because they had a form-focused nature, but the results revealed that students produced exact repetition at a similar rate in both types of activities. One possible reason is that some activities that were categorized as "meaningful" in my lessons might have had some communicative orientation. For example, Charades seemed to be more meaningful-oriented than teacher-guided drills. When I recast a student's non-target utterance, the student who was performing the action usually gave an immediate response to either confirm or disconfirm the meaning of my recast. Thus, the direct addressees of my recast had no opportunities to repeat my recast, or might not see the need for repetition because the original message had already been conveyed. If the message that I recast was disconfirmed, other students would start formulating new questions again. They were so engaged in exchanging meaning that sometimes their utterances would overlap. Perhaps, from the students' perspective,

exchanging meaning might be more important than producing target-like forms. Another reason may be student U, who was overrepresented in the data set on recast processing in communicative activities. After I gave him 6 recasts that allowed uptake in communicative activities (i.e., recasts that were not followed by my topic continuation), he responded with 4 exact repetitions. However, he did not produce many exact repetitions in meaningful activities. Perhaps, communicative activities especially facilitated exact repetitions from this one student. It is worthwhile to note that most of U's exact repetitions in communicative activities were from his one-to-one interaction with me, where he had more opportunities to produce output than in whole-class interaction. Possibly, activity types might not affect U's production of exact repetitions, but might affect his opportunities to receive my recasts, thus the opportunities to produce exact repetitions. U might be the type of learner who is disposed to noticing recasts and modifying his output possibly regardless of activity type.

Though meaningful activities did not invite more uptake than communicative activities, two other types of responses, "other modifications" and "acknowledgment", which were uniquely found in meaningful activities, showed that students did appear to be focused on form in meaningful activities. Firstly, students sometimes were able to modify their output, though their modifications did not include exact repetitions of my recasts (Example 14 and 15). Despite the fact that students did not produce exact repetitions in these cases, they seemed to be able to notice the gap during meaningful activities. Secondly, students' responses of "acknowledgment" seemed to be associated with delayed modified output in the same lesson (see Example 16 and 17). If the effectiveness of recasts is measured not only by immediate modified output but also delayed modified output, it is likely that my recasts were still effective in meaningful activities.

The results also revealed that students initiated more topic continuation after recasts in communicative activities, which implied that they were more attentive to meaning than to form in these activities. This finding becomes more interesting when coupled with another finding that 87.5% of the students' topic-continuation was initiated by peers. It may be that students were actively engaged in negotiating meaning and vied for turns to speak up. Though my class consisted of 14 students, there was more distraction during whole-class activities than one-to-one interaction. In the whole-class context, even if a student was able to notice my recasts and ready to modify his or her output, other classmates might often seize the floor before he or she had time to respond.

It may be helpful to point out that I initiated topic continuation equally frequently in both activity types, indicating that I denied students opportunities to respond to my recasts at a similar rate regardless of activity type. Note that all of my topic continuation was made in whole-class or group interaction. In other words, I did this less, and so students usually had better opportunities to respond to my recasts, in interactions involving one-to-one interaction, as in the case with student U. When I was leading teacher-fronted discussions, I seemed to be focusing more on advancing the lesson rather than insisting on students modifying their output after my recasts.

My Ungrammatical Recasts to Students' Errors

When I recast students' errors, I sometimes omitted articles before singular nouns or plural markers. Such omissions in speaking might be reflective of an aspect of my interlanguage that has several possible causes. The first one might be L1 transfer. In Chinese, there are no articles, and plurality is rarely expressed. Thus, even though I have reached an advanced level of English proficiency, I may still use articles inconsistently or drop the "s" after plural nouns in

some situations. The second explanation might relate to my experience of learning English. I started to learn English in my home country, China, when I was a fourth grader (about 10 years old). The initial acquisition of the rules about supplying articles before singular nouns and marking plural nouns with "s/es" took place in an EFL classroom where the teacher was a native speaker of Chinese. My exposure to the use of articles and nouns was limited to the classroom for the first two years of learning where it's possible that my English teachers in elementary school did not always supply articles when they spoke in English. Thus, I might have been exposed to both target-like and non-target use of articles and nouns, which could have undermined my initial process of encoding target-like representations and/or postpone the restructuring of non-target forms in my interlanguage. In addition, during my early years of learning English, I did not have many opportunities to apply rules to speaking practice because the classes were focused on accuracy in writing. Most speaking exercises centered on rote memorization, such as drilling, choral reading aloud, and role playing a dialogue. As a result, I might have built a solid foundation of explicit knowledge about English rules (and did well in paper-and-pencil exams), but did not have the opportunity to convert this to implicit knowledge. So I remained inaccurate in my oral production of certain forms, for example, the marking of plural nouns. This lack of opportunity to develop implicit grammar rules in oral practice included a lack of corrective feedback from the teacher, thus possibly leading to fossilization of certain non-target forms. A third possible explanation for my errors might be the low communicative value of articles and plural noun markers. Since these two linguistic features are typically redundant in communication, as compared to nouns and verbs, I might have not noticed corrections when teachers recasted my non-target use of articles and plural noun markers. Admittedly, my teachers could have provided other types of corrective feedback besides recasts

in class, which would have served as better signals to my errors and drawn my attention to these trouble sources more effectively. Nevertheless, recasts were probably a frequent, if not dominant, type of corrective feedback in my EFL class, given a plethora of evidence for the prevalence of recasts across instructional settings (Lyster and Mori, 2006).

Another non-target form that I sometimes produced in speech was third person singular pronouns that were mismarked for gender. Example 15 illustrates my incorrect choice of “he” when I referred to a student’s wife. Though this was the only erroneous instance of wrong gender reference in the current study, I remember myself committing similar errors in class at other times, using “he” and “his” for females, or “her” and “hers” for males. Just as in my inconsistent use of articles, my failure to distinguish consistently between gender pronouns in speaking can also be accounted for by L1 influence. In spoken Chinese, third person singular pronouns have the same pronunciation, “ta”, regardless of the gender of the referent; thus Chinese learners often fail to differentiate “he” and “she” in spoken English (Chang, 2001).

Students’ Reactions to My Ungrammatical Recasts

The results showed that students seemed to respond differently to my ill-formed recasts depending on the error type. Possibly, the communicative value of a given ungrammatical form affected the likelihood of that error being noticed by the students. Certain errors seemed to be more noticeable because they played a more important role in communication. My students noticed and corrected my wrong choice of pronoun gender (Example 14) possibly because the incorrect subject pronoun “he” appeared to be salient to students distorted the meaning of the message dramatically. However, when I made errors with articles or plural noun marking, they simply continued the topic without correcting or repeating my errors, and some of their topic-

continuation moves after my errors were accompanied by signs of acknowledgments (e.g., "yeah"). Perhaps, the omission of articles or plural noun markers, which were the trouble source in the majority of my ungrammatical responses, was unlikely to cause such breakdown. The low phonological salience of articles and plural-s also made them difficult to hear even when they were present in my speech; thus their absence might be even harder to notice by the students. Another possibility was that my students had not achieved developmental readiness to monitor my output of, in particular, the consistent use of articles and plural noun markers. Being able to notice and/or correct my errors in this area requires successful mastery of metalinguistic knowledge about the targeted linguistic areas. Take the plural noun marking as an example. First, the students must have listening skills high enough to enable successful comprehension of my oral output. Then, to pass judgment on the accuracy of the plural nouns in my utterances, students would need to retrieve and synthesize different knowledge about this aspect of English, such as whether a noun is countable or not, and whether it simply takes a regular "s" or follows a different spelling and pronunciation rule (i.e., "es" ending). Such a complex process may be too demanding for students at this proficiency level.

Before the study, I was concerned about whether my ungrammatical responses would have any impact on the students' subsequent oral output, and if so, how they would influence my students' learning. From the results of the study, it seemed that students did not take up my errors in most cases, nor was it clear whether they would imitate my errors later on. Admittedly, ESL students are more advantaged than EFL students because the former have more exposure to authentic English outside of class. This might be one reason my ungrammatical responses did not seem to have a great influence on my students' oral output. However, it is important to provide recasts that are grammatical after students' errors because recasts are supposed to serve as target-

like exemplars in the input that contrasted with students' non-target utterances. From my personal experience of learning English, the benefits from getting corrective feedback in class would be undermined if the teacher did not provide timely and grammatical correction, particularly for those errors in linguistic features in the student's current developmental stage. Supply of the plural markers may be such a linguistic target for most of my students at this high-beginning level. If so, they might not learn that omission of the plural marker "s" is ungrammatical if my responses also contained unmarked plural nouns. Thus, it is crucial for me to maintain the grammaticality of my recasts as much as I can.

Pedagogical Implications

This descriptive self-study of my corrective feedback (along with ungrammatical responses to students' errors) and students' responses has revealed three major pedagogical implications about how I can play a better role as a facilitator and monitor in class, enhance the effectiveness of my recasts, and encourage learner autonomy through self- and peer-correcting.

Enhance My Teacher's Role as a Facilitator and Monitor in Class

In my early years of learning English, traditional approaches prevailed in most EFL classrooms. Grammar forms were almost always presented deductively by the teacher, and controlled practice (e.g., choral repetition) was used to drill students on the target form. Little emphasis was given to real communication because learning was considered to be an individualistic rather than a cooperative process. While many of my peers abhorred it, I benefited from this accuracy-oriented instruction and did well in exams. Subsequently and subconsciously, I transferred my learning experience to my teaching practice. My preference for deductive learning approaches was reinforced when it came to teaching a grammar class for the first time.

However, the outcome turned out to be discouraging at the beginning of this study. My students demonstrated low emotional engagement and participation in class. For the majority of time, they just remained quiet, or at best, responded chorally. I was unable to collect enough meaningful, interactive data using this approach. This led me to the realization that my students came into the classroom with a mix of learning styles, aptitudes and experiences that differed from mine in some way. I also overlooked a crucial factor that contributed to my own acquisition of English—the important process of using the language. The traditional approaches used in my English classes wouldn't have had such a positive effect on me without the additional large amount of time I spent using English in extra-curricular activities (e.g., performing in English dramas, participating in English speaking contests, and giving poster presentations in English). Driven by the love for the English language and western culture, the receptive explicit knowledge I learned in class became activated into implicit knowledge by these extra-curricular experiences in using English. My oral accuracy gradually improved along with fluency in the process of interaction where I could test hypotheses in my interlanguage, reinforce target-like representations, and reconstruct non-target representations.

With the importance of activating dormant explicit knowledge in mind, I began to orient my teaching approach towards communicative language teaching. Accuracy was still a focus, but not the only focus. Fluency also had to be developed, which was made possible only when students had the opportunities to experiment with their grammar resources at the risk of making errors. Deductive and inductive learning approaches were combined. For example, the students were asked to analyze grammar rules and report on their summary before I presented the rules explicitly. I also assigned them more interactive opportunities that emulated real-life situations. I

gradually learned to step back to monitor their language output and chime in to direct traffic and provide feedback when necessary.

The present study has prompted me to reflect on the role of teacher as a facilitator and monitor (Richards, 2006, p. 5) in terms of providing corrective feedback in class. Firstly, I should remind myself to allow more wait time for students to respond to my recasts in teacher-whole class interaction. I tended to insist on students modifying their output and thus waited longer in one-to-one interaction, but in whole-class or group activities I often continued the topic without giving them any time to respond.

Secondly, it is important to consider what feedback types should be provided in what interactional contexts in order to stimulate expected responses from the students. For example, recasts seemed to be ineffective in the activity of Charades. If the goal is to elicit modified output, I should use more metalinguistic clues. As Lyster and Mori (2006) have maintained, learners seem to vary in the degrees of benefits from different types of corrective feedback, thus, it is judicious to use a variety of corrective feedback types rather than rely on recasts alone. Besides, both meaningful and communicative activities should be included (not necessarily in the same lesson, but with the same target grammar) so that students can have exposure to and take advantage of different feedback types.

Thirdly, a balance should be kept between teacher-whole class and teacher- student-only interactions to enhance the effect of corrective feedback, especially recasts. In teacher-whole class interactions, students can have a positive influence on each other's oral output. Recall in Example 20 that student J's modified output "two years" (line 8) might be less likely a result of

my recast (line 4), but more likely a result of the consecutive target-like productions in the exchanges between student A and me (line 5 and 6).

Enhance the Effectiveness of Recasts

As discussed earlier, I should provide recasts less often, but more importantly, I should enhance the salience of my recasts when I use them so that students can notice them better. One way is to reduce the number of non-corrective repetitions I make after the students' well-formed utterances. Excessive use of non-corrective repetitions not only exacerbates the ambiguity of recasts, but also competes against the students' practice opportunities in limited class time. Instead of non-corrective repetitions, other techniques (for example, clarification requests) can be used to make sure I understand the students. In the current two lessons, I had some success in eliciting modified output with explicit recasts unintentionally, yet I should remind myself of using them systematically and constantly in the future. Also, I can provide non-verbal cues along with my corrective feedback moves, for example, raising my eyebrows and/or moving my face across the shoulders.

Students should also be explicitly introduced to the idea of recasts as corrective feedback at the beginning of the course, and be familiarized with the forms and functions of recasts throughout the first few weeks of training. I should constantly remind my students during the training period that I will focus on their oral accuracy, and that they need to be alert if their utterances are followed by my "repetitions" (including recasts), and detect the discrepancy between their utterances and my recasts. Also, it is necessary to shift the sole focus on written accuracy to dual focuses that also emphasize oral accuracy. I should allow students sufficient opportunities to practice speaking in class so that they can receive corrective feedback.

Increase Students' Awareness of Self- and Peer-correcting (Including My Output)

To promote learner autonomy in self-monitoring output, I can give a speaking diagnostic test to students at the beginning of the course, and have them identify some common errors in their speech. Throughout the semester, regular speaking tests that target different grammar forms or phonological features could be given at intervals, and students asked to keep track of any new errors in a grammar log. In this way, they might make a habit of self-monitoring their oral accuracy. In addition, as a non-native speaker of English who shares some typical errors in my interlanguage with my students (for example, the wrong choice of gender pronoun to refer to a person of an opposite gender, and the omission of "s" after a plural noun), I should tell the students that it is normal to commit errors when learning a new language (Corder, 1967). Thus, errors should not be viewed as stigmas, but rather as indications of one's efforts in experimenting with and capitalizing on his or her language resources—a process of detecting form-meaning mismatches, reconstructing non-target representations, and improving communicative competence in the meanwhile. A non-threatening atmosphere should be cultivated in class where the students are unafraid of making errors, comfortable with being corrected by the teacher, and ultimately, capable of monitoring everyone's oral output, including their teacher's. As a teacher and a role model, I should also strive to maintain a target-like standard for my own oral output in class, especially those utterances involving the use of articles, plural markers and gender pronouns.

In a personal conversation, "A", the student who corrected my erroneous recast in Example 12, expressed his appreciation to me for establishing such an amiable class atmosphere. The fact that I am a non-native speaker did not disadvantage him as an English learner, but rather, eased pressure on him so that he could ask questions and challenge my instruction in

class. Actually, it was not only "A" but also other students who constantly paid attention to the grammaticality and spelling of my notes on the board. We would often discuss the challenges facing an English learner, share our learning experiences, and investigate the way grammar points are presented in the textbook as compared to how they are used in real-life scenarios. There was a strong sympathy between the students and me, as they saw me as not only a teacher, but also a peer learner at an advanced level. Because vulnerability may lead to mutual accountability, inviting students to monitor the grammaticality of my output can help remove the stigma of errors, and promote learner autonomy: the sense that we should all be responsible for and reflective about our own learning. Both students and I can benefit from the process of holding each other accountable for a more target-like standard of output.

As a small-scale classroom study, the current study suffered many limitations. First, the small sample is not sufficient to reveal a comprehensive pattern of corrective feedback and modified output. Most of the recast data was collected from my interaction with student U, thus the results of modified output after recasts might be overrepresented. Secondly, inter-rater reliability is unavailable because all the data of corrective feedback and students' modified output was coded by me alone. Having a second rater to analyze all the data and not just the recast data will improve the warranty of the results. Thirdly, the definition of "non-target utterances" included an extra criterion based on the objectives of lessons; that is, whenever students used the present progressive in meaningful activities, they were required to produce a complete utterance using the three essential elements. It may be useful to revisit the data and see how strictly I stuck to this criterion, in other words, how often I corrected those "incomplete" utterances, and how many corrective feedback targeted utterances categorized as errors by this extra standard. Finally, combined feedback was coded as a single feedback move given

immediately prior to students' subsequent responses. The effectiveness of such feedback might be enhanced by the combination of two feedback types. Coding combined feedback as a seventh feedback type might better reveal its effectiveness in my class.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this descriptive self-study revealed some patterns of my corrective feedback and students' modified output. It also showed some error patterns in my recasts to students' ungrammatical utterances. Students were able to correct my errors that were meaning-bearing in communication. However, they did not correct most of my other errors, nor did they repeat them in their subsequent output. These results have suggested that as a teacher, I should a) facilitate classroom interaction to provide students with opportunities to modify output after my corrective feedback; b) monitor their oral output and offer various feedback types accordingly instead of overusing recasts; c) raise students' awareness of oral accuracy by encouraging them to correct errors that occurred in class, whether those errors were committed by themselves, peer students, or their teacher; d) maintain the target-like standard of my oral output in class.

As a non-native English speaker, I gained a better knowledge of my own interlanguage, and a deeper understanding of my dual identity: a teacher and an advanced learner. The linguistic shortcomings of being a non-native English speaker might be offset if I can cultivate an amiable classroom atmosphere where students are attentive, sensitive and used to error correction by their teacher and peers alike. Maybe I should keep in mind student A's well-articulated expectation of teachers, which might be true to most language learners (at least to me), "I don't want a teacher who just stands behind the wall and cheers for me, but one who is willing to climb over and help me to get to the other side of it."

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