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Learner Interpretation of Teacher Corrective Intention of Feedback in EFL Classrooms

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The role of corrective feedback (CF) has long been discussed in the field of second language acquisition. It has been claimed that CF enables learners to notice the problems in their second language (L2) production. However, it should not be assumed that learners always adequately interpret teachers' responses to their problematic utterance as correction. Especially when feedback is provided in an implicit way, the possibility that CF goes unnoticed should not be excluded. In this regard, the study aims to investigate how learners perceive teachers' corrective feedback in English classrooms in Korea. The study focuses particularly on examining the relationship between type of feedback and target linguistic content with learner interpretation of teacher corrective intention. Nine classrooms were observed and videotaped. Forty-five students and nine teachers participated in stimulated recall interviews. Their comments were analyzed to document the learners' perception and the teachers' intention of feedback. It was found that learner perception of teacher corrective intention was at its greatest when feedback was provided explicitly and was focused on morphological errors.

[feedback/ linguistic content/ teacher intention/ learner interpretation]

I. INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of corrective feedback (CF) in second language (L2) learning has been a topic of much discussion in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) (Byun & Kayi-Aydar, 2010; Ellis, 2010; Kim & Lee, 2009; Long, 2007). Those who purport the nativist theory believe that corrective feedback has little impact on SLA and could

even be harmful (Cook, 1991; Krashen, 1985; Schwartz, 1993). They claim that the formation and restructuring of L2 grammars is solely attributable to innate human linguistic mechanism, working in tandem with positive evidence (Cook, 1991; Schwartz, 1993). These contentions have been challenged by both theoretical and empirical research which reveals that L2 learning cannot be effected by exposure to positive input alone, even if input is comprehensible (Bley-Vroman, 1989; Swain, 1985). Long (1996), for instance, claims that corrective feedback provides not only direct and indirect information about what is not grammatical but also additional positive evidence which may otherwise be absent in the input. The debate between the nativists and their detractors has spawned a great deal of research on corrective feedback. L2 researchers have attempted to investigate the impact of CF on L2 development form various angles (references). Studies in CF have reported mounting evidence that supports a facilitative role of CF in SLA (Li, 2010; Lyster & Satio, 2010), bringing attention to researchers who have been supportive of the role of CF in L2 learning.

One of the essential theoretical explanations that accounts for the facilitative role of CF is that it helps learners notice linguistic problems in their production (Schmidt, 1990, 2001). In L2 classrooms, language teachers use a wide range of CF. Teachers can use overt CF, pointing out that the learner's production is not accurate (i.e., explicit CF). On the other hand, teachers can provide CF covertly, hinting that the learner's production is not targetlike (i.e., implicit CF). It has been found that, in meaning-based classrooms, teachers tend to use more implicit CF than explicit CF since implicit CF is unlikely to interrupt the flow of communication. One logical question that follows is whether or not implicit CF is noticeable enough to help learners identify linguistic problems in their production, especially during oral interaction in L2 classrooms. The possibility that implicit CF goes unnoticed cannot be excluded. In addition, there might be cases when learners might misunderstand the nature of errors that trigger CF although they notice the teacher's corrective intention (Han, 2001). Such misunderstanding subsequently may render CF ineffective.

Indeed, the potential mismatches between the teacher's intended pedagogical focus and students' actual attentional focus have been reported in the SLA literature (Jones, 1992). And yet surprisingly, little empirical research actually looks into the difference between the teacher's intention of CF and learners' interpretation in L2 classrooms. In this regard, the current study aims to investigate the extent to which the teacher's intention of CF overlaps the student's interpretation. Furthermore, it examines to what extent overlap is related to type of CF and linguistic target - two factors identified as the features that could affect learner perception of feedback.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Types of Corrective Feedback and Learner Perception

Teachers provide a wide range of CF to help learners identify problems in their erroneous utterances. CF can be provided in an explicit way as shown in Example [1] (all examples in this paper come from the data collected for the current study).

Example [1] Explicit CF

S: I stayed at the hotel…hmmm around hotel, there are many store.
T: Not 'are'.
S: Yes, there were many shop.

Teachers can also covertly correct learners' errors (i.e., implicit CF). Implicit CF may take the form of recasts or prompts (i.e., clarification requests and elicitations). Ellis (2010) refers to recasts as input-generated CF in that recasts provide models. In contrast, prompts are referred to as output-generated CF since they require the learner to modify his or her initial utterance. Teachers sometimes repeat the learner's erroneous utterance or use more than one type of correction. Examples and explanations of each type of feedback are presented below.

Example [2] Recasts

Recasts refer to the reformulation of the whole or part of learners' erroneous utterance without changing the meaning.

S: When I enter the university, I went here alone.
T: You came here alone.
S: I came here alone.

Example [3] Clarification requests

Teachers gesture to students to signal that the utterances were not understood or were ill-formed.

S: Eye ache
T: Uh? What did you say?
S: I have eye pain. So I see my doctor.

Example [4] Elicitations

Teachers attempt to elicit the correct form from the students.

S: Actually, I saw this. When I was… New York, I visited MoMa art gallery. I see, I saw this. It is more than beautiful than this one.
T: More…
S: Ah, more than, more beautiful than this.
T: Okay, how about XX?

Teachers sometimes repeat learners' ill-formed utterance without any change as in Example [5].

Example [5] Repetitions

S: I went to Kim-bab Chunkgook. Yesterday, my sister call from Korea University, so I go there.
T: You go there?
S: Yes. She and I together.

Teachers use an increasing intonation or place prosodic stress on the errors in the provision of repetitions. They often use repetitions as an attention-getting device, hoping learners will notice their errors.

Teachers can also use more than one type of CF as shown in Example [6].

Example [6] Multiple feedback

S: Yes, I don't do the shopping a lot of time.
T: A lot of time? All the time? *(repetition + recast)*
S: Yes, only Sunday.

As presented above, teachers use various strategies to correct learners' errors. Many observational studies report that teachers tend to use more implicit CF in meaning-oriented classrooms. More precisely, teachers prefer recasts over other types of implicit CF (Loewen & Philp, 2006; Yoshida, 2008).

Naturally and logically, we come to question whether or not learners are able to perceive CF and, more importantly, to identify the error that invites the correction while they engage in a meaning-oriented interaction. This is a crucial matter since it brings about 'noticing the gap', which has been considered as the greatest benefit that CF can bring about (Long, 1996, 2007).

With the acknowledgement of the importance of this matter, some researchers paid attention to investigate learner perception of CF in a direct manner (e.g., measuring perception via introspective measure). Pioneer research was conducted by Roberts (1995). He explored how much error correction students noticed and understood in a Japanese as a foreign language classroom. For the study, he video-taped a 50-minute class and three volunteer students individually viewed the tape. They were told to note down any instance of teacher correction. The study found that the students, on average, identified 35% of the error correction and understood the correction 25% of the time. On the whole, he concluded that "students are only aware of corrective activity in the classroom a fraction of time" (p. 180).

A similar finding is reported in Mackey, Gass, and McDonough (2000). They investigated how learners perceived interactional feedback they received from native speakers (or near-native speakers) of the language they were learning in a dyadic setting. As reported in Roberts (1995), there is a discrepancy between feedback and perceptions. Their post hoc analyses of data led them to conclude that recasts were the least accurately perceived compared to other types of interactional feedback.

Kim and Han (2007) specifically looked into learners' recognition of recasts in four meaning-based English classrooms in Korea. While previous studies on CF treated recasts as a unitary entity, Kim and Han regarded recasts as a versatile feature. Thus, they examined whether learners recognized recasts as correction, as well as whether or not it had to do with such external factors as the way of provision (e.g., interrogative, declarative, isolated or incorporated recasts) and target linguistic feature. Overall, they found that compared to other previous studies, recasts were perceived as correction to a considerable degree although the rate of recognition was determined by the external factors.

The studies reviewed above obviously show that learner interpretation of CF can be different depending upon the type of CF. Therefore, the current study attempts to investigate more precisely which type of CF can elicit a stronger or weaker match between learner interpretation and teacher intention about CF.

2. Type of Linguistic Target and Learner Perception

Target linguistic features of CF have been considered as a factor that affects learner perception of feedback, and this has been proved empirically. For instance, as briefly mentioned above, Mackey et al. (2000) found that learner perception of feedback varied across the type of target linguistic feature of the feedback. CF that targeted lexical errors was correctly perceived; in contrast, CF provided to morphosyntactic errors presented the highest index of misunderstanding among students. A very similar finding resulted in

Kim and Han (2007). They found that morphosyntactic errors invited recasts most often, but morphosyntactic recasts elicited the least accurate recognition of feedback. Both studies argued that the lack of learner noticing of morphosyntactic CF might be due to the fact that this type of error was unlikely to invite negotiation. In other words, morphosyntactic errors rarely interrupted the flow of communication while lexical and phonological errors were problematic in understanding the communication. Kim and Han (2007) also offered an alternative explanation for the lack of noticing of morphosyntactic errors: "the lack of noticing may have been driven by learners' natural inclination for processing input for meaning" (p. 293).

It is important to point out that not all linguistic forms may be processed and acquired in the same manner. For long, researchers have argued that the degree of explicitness of L2 instruction that is amenable to L2 learning would differ according to the inherent characteristics of linguist features (e.g., salience and complexity) (Dekeyser, 2005; VanPatten, 2004). The issue concerning type of instruction is more amenable to which type of linguistic features has not yet been settled in a clear way. Likewise, as Long (2007) notes that recasts may work better for certain linguistic features and may be less effective for other linguistic features, type of target linguistic features appears to be a factor the extents which learner interpretation of CF.

3. Previous Studies in Teacher Intention and Learner Interpretation of CF

Thus far, not many studies have paid attention to both teacher intention and learner interpretation of CF although as previously reported there have been studies that examined learner perception of CF. One of the few studies is Kim and Han's (2007) research. They investigated the extent to which teachers' intentions and the learners' interpretations of recasts overlapped in four intermediate English classrooms in Korea. The classes were video and audio taped. Stimulated recall interview data from two teachers and twenty students were analyzed. The study found that when teachers provided recasts with corrective intent, students interpreted the recasts as correction to their linguistic problems 65% of the time. On the other hand, when teachers' intention was communicative (i.e., recasts were provided as a means of confirmation check), students understood the recasts as a response to the content of their utterances 77% of the time. This finding shows a considerable match between the teachers' intention and learner interpretation. Especially when considering that recasts are widely known to be one of the most unobtrusive CF, the finding shows a contradiction to the general assumption that implicit CF has a high possibility to go unnoticed as correction. Kim and Han attributed this result to the fact that the teachers consistently used recasts, albeit in various forms, as an instructional strategy (78% of recasts were corrective recasts).

Consistency is one of the conditions necessary for recasts to achieve efficacy (Han, 2002).

In a very similar line, Mackey, Al-Khalil, Atanassova, Hama, Logan-Terry, and Nakatsulasa (2007) investigated learners' perceptions and teachers' intentions about corrective feedback occurring in two beginning Arabic classes. Whereas Kim and Han (2007) limited their analysis to recasts, Mackey et al. (2007) examined learner interpretations about four types of feedback (i.e., explicit feedback, declarative recast, interrogative recast, and combination). They specifically looked into whether the type of feedback would affect the learners' perception about the linguistic target of feedback. Based on the analysis of stimulated recall comments from eleven students and two teachers, they concluded that learners' perceptions and teachers' intentions about the linguistic target of corrective feedback matched the most when feedback targeted lexis and was provided explicitly.

More recently, Yoshida (2010) examined learner and teacher perception of corrective feedback in a Japanese classroom. Unlike the aforementioned two studies, Yoshida focused on scrutinizing whether learners' immediate responses to feedback were an indication of their accurate perceptions of the feedback. In addition, Yoshida examined how the teacher interprets learners' responses. Seven students and two teachers participated in the study. Since the study performed a qualitative analysis, it did not show the frequency of the overlap between learner responses to CF and learner noticing thereof. However, detailed descriptions of the stimulated recall comments from the students showed that their responses to CF did not necessarily indicate their noticing of CF. In addition, the teachers' perceptions of the students' responses to CF were very much determined by their language abilities.

4. Research Questions

As the aforementioned studies show, there have been diverse attempts to examine the discrepancy between learner perception of and teacher intention in CF. However, most of the previous research has been performed in a small scale, including a small number of classrooms and participants. In this regard, the current study aims to generate a more general picture of learner interpretation and teacher intention than the previous studies by including more participants and classrooms than previous research. In addition, following Mackey et al. (2007), the study focuses on researching whether or not type of feedback and target linguistic content are related to learner interpretation of and teacher intention in corrective feedback. The current study raises two research questions:

1) Is the overlap rate of learner correct interpretation of teacher corrective intention related to the type of CF?
2) Is the overlap rate of learner correct interpretation and teacher corrective intention related to the type of target linguistic feature?

III. METHOD

1. Context and Participation

Nine intact high-beginning and intermediate adult English classrooms at a language school affiliated with a university in Korea participated in the study (88 students and 9 teachers). The class meets four times a week for 90 minutes per session. The primary goal of the classes was to develop communicative skills in English with minimal explicit grammar instruction, using topic-based textbooks. The classes consisted of 9 to 13 students on the date the study was conducted. The teachers (2 males; 7 females) were all native speakers of English from the USA and Canada. They had taught EFL classes for more than two years. Six of the teachers held Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)/Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) certificates. The students, aged between 19 and 45, were placed into the high-beginning and intermediate classes based on their scores on a pretest (i.e., oral test). Teachers and students were not informed of the exact purpose of the study. Instead, they were informed that the focus of the study was on general teacher-student interaction.

2. Design and Procedures

1) Recording of classroom interaction

Each class was observed and videotaped and audiotaped on a different date. While recording, the researcher sat at the back of the room and noted down every instance of CF offered by the teacher. She also took down the index numbers displayed on the recorder to track the time at which CF occurred.

2) Clipping the class tape

After each class, there was a 95-mintue break. During the break, the tapes were reviewed by the researcher, guided by the index numbers she noted during the observation. Instances of CF, along with the teacher’s response to content (as distractor

items), were clipped. Since the focus of the study was on students' recognition of corrective feedback occurring during a meaning-oriented interaction, CF provided during a meaning-oriented interaction was clipped (i.e., the feedback provided during form-focused class time such as explicit grammar instruction were excluded).

3) Stimulated Recall Interview with Students

After the procedure of tape clipping, the students (five students from each class, total 45 students) have an individual stimulated recall interview with the researcher. In the recall session, the students watched the clips of the class interactions. After watching each clip, the researcher prompted the student to recall what he/she was thinking at the moment when the CF was provided by the teacher. Prompt questions such as "What were you thinking at that time?" and "Can you tell me what you thought when the teacher said that?" were used. The same question was asked as a distractor after showing the instances where the teacher responded to the content of the student's utterance. The interview was administrated in Korean in order to ensure that the students' recalls would not be distorted by their lack of English speaking ability. The interview was audio-taped and subsequently translated and transcribed into English.

4) Stimulated Recall Interview with Teachers

The researcher interviewed each teacher after documenting learners' interpretations. During the interview, the teacher watched the video clips of his/her own class – the same clips the students had watched – and s/he was asked to recall what s/he was thinking at the time of providing the feedback to the student. The interview was conducted in English and it was audio-taped. The interview was transcribed by the researcher.

3. Coding

1) Corrective Feedback

The categories employed in the current study were identical with the ones described in the literature review section. However, in the case of recasts, they were divided into two types depending on whether recasts were provided in declarative form or in interrogative form. Seven types of CF were identified: explicit correction, declarative recasts, interrogative recasts, clarification requests, elicitations, repetitions, and multiple feedback.

2) Linguistic Target

Types of linguistic features were classified into four types - morphology, syntax, lexicon, and phonology.

(1) Morphology

Morphological CF concerns plurals, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, articles, and gerunds. In the example given below, the student omitted the plural *-s* with the quantifier *some*, which triggered the teacher's recast.

Example [7] CF targeting morphological errors

S: After that, I ate some *cookie* and hot tea with my friend.
T: Some *cookies* and hot tea with my friend.
S: But after that…

(2) Syntax

Syntactic CF targeted errors concerning word order, sub-category of complements, relativization, comparatives, passivization, and question formation. In the example below, the student failed to invert the subject and the verb.

Example [8] CF targeting syntactic errors

S: I didn't know who was he.
T: Who he was. Not who was he.
S: Yes, who he was. I didn't see him before.

(3) Lexicon

Lexical CF targeted errors related to choice of word, prepositions, collocations, and derivational affixes.[1] In the following example, the teacher recast S's word choice of *pain control medicine* into *pain killers*.

Example [9] CF targeting lexical errors

S: I gave him some pain control medicine.
T: Pain killers.
S: *Pain killers*. I said that S5 shouldn't take… shouldn't walk for a long time.

[1] In this study, CF targeting derivational affixes was categorized as lexical recasts, while recasts targeting inflectional affixes were coded as morphological recasts (Lyster, 1998a).

(4) Phonology

Phonological CF targeted errors related to pronunciation. In Example 10, the teacher explicitly pointed out that the learner's pronunciation of 'Sauna' was not correct.

Example [10] CF targeting phonological errors

S: I would like to go to Sauan [Sauna] introduced by Jennifer as soon as possible.
T: Not [Sa-u] it's just [Saw] like saw…I would like to go the Sauna too. Later… we shall go there together.

3) Stimulated recall comments

(1) Learner Interpretation about CF

Perception was considered isomorphic with noticing, and following Schmidt (1990), it was operationalized as students' interpretative comments on teachers' corrective feedback. The students' comments were coded according to whether or not learners perceive the feedback as correction or not: perception of corrective function of feedback (PC), no perception of corrective function (NPC), or no comment (i.e., the learner fails to remember what she/he was thinking at the time of the provision of feedback).

(2) Teacher intention about CF

The teachers' recall comments were coded into three types: (1) corrective intent, (2) communicative intent, or (3) no comment. *No comment* refers to cases when the teacher did not remember his/her intent for the recast.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Learner Interpretation of Teacher Corrective Intention in relation to the Type of CF

As for the feedback that teachers provided, the researcher counted the number of feedback that the teachers recalled as feedback when they offered it with corrective intentions. As Table 1 shows, the teachers provided 256 cases of feedback with corrective intentions. Declarative recasts were most frequently provided (99 out of 256, 39%) followed by explicit correction (45 out of 256, 18%), interrogative recasts (33 out of 256, 13%), clarification requests (23 out of 256, 9%), multiple correction (20 out of 256, 8%), elicitations (19 out of 256, 7%), and repetitions (17 out of 256, 6%). As many other studies have found, the teachers who participated in the current study favored recasts the most (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Yoshida, 2008).

TABLE 1

Total Number and Percentage of Corrective Feedback

EC	DR	IR	CL	RE	EL	MUL	Total
45	99	33	23	17	19	20	256
(18)	(39)	(13)	(9)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(100)

(Note: EC=Explicit correction; DR=Declarative recasts; IR=interrogative recasts; CL=clarification requests; RE=Repetitions; EL=Elicitations; ML=Multiple feedback; numbers in parentheses denote percentage)

In order to investigate whether or not there is a relationship between learner interpretation of teachers' corrective intention and the type of feedback, the stimulated recall data were analyzed. As in Table 2, the learners perceived teacher corrective intention most successfully when the correction was provided in the type of explicit error correction (among 225 comments on explicit correction, 84% of the comments showed learner perception of corrective intention) followed by declarative recasts, elicitations, clarification requests, multiple feedback, interrogative recasts, and repetitions.

TABLE 2

Learner Perception of CF in relation to Type of Feedback

	EC	DR	IR	CL	RE	EL	MUL	Total
PC	189	346	43	37	10	47	31	703
	(84)	(70)	(26)	(32)	(12)	(49)	(31)	(55)
NPC	26	114	107	74	70	46	64	501
	(12)	(23)	(65)	(64)	(82)	(48)	(64)	(39)
NC	10	35	15	4	5	2	5	76
	(4)	(7)	(9)	(4)	(6)	(3)	(5)	(6)
Total	225	495	165	115	85	95	100	1280

(Note: PC=Perception of corrective intention; NPC=No perception of corrective intention; NC=No comment; numbers in parentheses denote percentage)

The finding that explicit correction most successfully resulted in learner perception of teacher corrective intention was expected since the teachers clearly delivered their corrective intention in explicit correction. Mackey et al. (2007) also found a similar result. A more intriguing case is the one where the learners showed no perception of corrective intention (12% of comments). When these comments were further scrutinized, it was found that the comments were all from the ones who were not direct recipients of feedback. Moreover, some of the learners considered it as a part of grammar instruction not as a response to erroneous utterances.

What seems to be an unexpected and surprising finding was that the learners perceived the teachers' corrective intention of declarative recasts 70% of the time. This finding contrasts with what many researchers have alleged: recasts might be too implicit and ambiguous for learners to recognize as correction to their linguistic problems (Lyster,

1998b). Unlike declarative recasts, interrogative recasts were not very successful in leading the learners to perceive the corrective intention. Many of the learners commented that they interpreted interrogative recasts as confirmation checks. Lyster (1998b) pointed out that in the classroom discourse recasts often play a dual function, correction and confirmation. When recasts are delivered in interrogative form, the function of confirmation will become distinct, which will consequently weaken the corrective function. Such results corroborated the previous studies that proved that learner uptake and perception of recasts are different depending on how they are delivered (Kim & Han, 2007; Loewen & Philp, 2006).

Among output-oriented feedback (clarification requests and elicitations) (Ellis, 2010), clarification requests were more likely to be perceived as a type of discourse move (i.e., a genuine clarification request) rather than correction. Compared to clarification requests, elicitations more often resulted in guiding the learners to perceive the corrective functions. Clarification requests are one of the most frequently used conversational moves in negotiating for meaning. In this regard, it seems natural for the learners to interpret clarification requests as a response to meaning not form. In the case of elicitations, they can be taken as an explicit signal that indicates that the teacher is correcting errors because elicitation is not something that frequently occurs as a conversational move in interaction. In a classroom setting, learners can consider it as an oral equivalent of a fill-in-the-blank task (e.g., S: So much… so many interesting place. T: There are many interesting…).

Multiple feedback was interpreted as correction 31% of the time. This relatively low rate of learner perception of teacher corrective intention was somewhat unexpected. We can easily assume that when there is more than one form of feedback being used, the learners will be more likely perceive it as correction. As opposed to this assumption, in the current study, the learners tended to perceive it as a conversational move. However, when explicit correction was used with other types of correction, the learners interpreted it as correction most of the time.

Repetitions were least frequently interpreted as corrections. When the teachers used repetitions, it was found that they provided repetitions using a raising intonation. This partially accounts for the reason why the learners interpreted repetitions as a confirmation check rather than a correction. Doughty and Varela (1998) employed repetitions as an attention-getting device in their experimental study on corrective recasts: the teacher repeated the students' initial utterance before providing a recast ('corrective recasting' in their terms). In their study, as the researchers claimed, repetition seemed to help learners to notice their errors. However, in the current study, when the teacher repeated the learners' erroneous initial utterances without any further

processes (i.e., providing recasts), the learners rarely perceived the teachers' corrective intention.

2. Learner Interpretation of Teacher Corrective Intention in relation to the Type of Target Linguistic Features

In order to answer the second research question, first, the number of corrective feedback provided to morphological, syntactic, lexical, and phonological errors was counted. As Table 3 shows, morphological errors most frequently invited corrective feedback (126 out of 295, 43%) followed by lexical (75 out of 295, 25%), syntactic (68 out of 295, 23%), and phonological errors (26 out of 295, 9%).

TABLE 3

Type of Target Linguistic Content

Morphology	Syntax	Lexicon	Phonology	Total
126 (43%)	68(23%)	75(25%)	26(9%)	295[2]

As a next step, whether or not the learners correctly interpreted the teachers' corrective intention was examined in relation to the type of target linguistic content. As in Table 4, morphological error correction was interpreted as it was 54% of the time, phonological errors 50% of the time, lexical errors 46%, and syntactic errors 44% of the time. As the rates show, the percentage of PC and NPC across the type of linguistic feature was not distinctive. However, the result of a chi-square test shows that learners' accurate interpretation of teachers' corrective intention has to do with target linguistic content (Chi-square value = 10.144; df=3; p=.017; Carmer's V=.086).

TABLE 4

Learner Perception of CF in relation to Type of Target Linguistic Content

	Morphology	Syntax	Lexicon	Phonology	Total
PC	341(54)	150 (44)	174 (46)	65(50)	730 (49)
NPC	247(39)	161 (47)	174 (46)	62 (48)	644 (44)
NC	42(7)	29 (9)	27 (8)	3 (2)	101 (7)
Total	630 (100)	340 (100)	375 (100)	130 (100)	1475 (100)

(Note: PC=Perception of corrective intention; NPC=No perception of corrective intention; NC=No comment; numbers in parentheses denote percentage)

[2] As Table 1 shows, the total number of corrective feedback was 256. Among these, 35 feedback episodes targeted more than on correction. When the learner perception of target linguistic feature was counted, each one was calculated.

TABLE 5

Type of Target Linguistic Content by Type of Corrective Feedback

	Morphology	Syntax	Lexicon	Phonology	Total
EC	19 (15)	12 (18)	3 (4)	11 (43)	45
DR	62 (49)	23 (33)	30 (40)	0	115
IR	12 (10)	11(17)	15 (20)	0	38
CL	6 (5)	3 (4)	17 (23)	4 (15)	30
RE	8 (6)	8 (12)	1 (1)	0	17
EL	4 (3)	5 (7)	7 (9)	3 (12)	19
MUL	15 (12)	6 (9)	2 (3)	8 (30)	31
Total	126	68	75	26	295

(Note: EC=Explicit correction; DR=Declarative recasts; IR=interrogative recasts; CL=clarification requests; RE=Repetitions; EL=Elicitations; ML=Multiple feedback; numbers in parentheses denote percentage)

The finding that learner perception was related to the type of target linguistic content was consistent with previous studies (e.g., Kim & Han, 2007; Mackey et al., 2007). However, other studies found that morphological feedback is relatively difficult to be recognized because morphological errors have a relatively low communicative value. In other words, morphological errors are less likely to interrupt the communication, so learners may not be sensitive to notice the feedback that is provided to morphological errors (Kim & Han, 2007; Mackey et al., 2000).

The different outcome found in the current study can be accounted for by the type of feedback used to correct the errors. As Table 5 shows, 64% of morphological correction was made in the forms of explicit correction and declarative recasts, the two feedback types which most successfully resulted in the learners' perception of the teachers' corrective intention. In addition, morphological correction was rarely made by clarification requests and repetitions, which were relatively unsuccessful feedback in enabling the learners to notice the teachers' corrective intention. It seems that morphological correction may not be less noticeable than other types of correction because their relatively lower communicative value. However, such inherent non-saliency may be enhanced by how correction is provided. In short, the type of corrective feedback seems to override the type of target linguistic content in guiding the learners to notice the teachers' corrective intention.

V. CONCLUSION

The current study reported that the teachers' corrective intention of feedback was not always well delivered to the learners. In addition, the learners' correct interpretations of the teachers' corrective intention were related to the type of corrective feedback and the

type of target linguistic features. The learners more frequently perceived the teachers' corrective intention when feedback was provided in a more explicit way and in a less confusing way. More specifically, when feedback was in the form of a question (i.e., interrogative recasts, clarification requests, and repetitions with a raising intonation), the learners were less likely to notice the teachers' corrective intention. When the type of target linguistic features was considered, linguistic content was found to be related to the learners' interpretation of the teachers' corrective intention. Interestingly, as opposed to the previous research (Kim & Han, 2007; Mackey et al., 2000), feedback that targeted morphological errors was well recognized by the learners. This can be attributed to the manner the errors were treated. In other words, the saliency of linguistic feature can be enhanced by how feedback is provided.

Learners' perception of corrective feedback could be considered a first step that leads learners to actually use the feedback. It should not take it for granted that teachers' corrective intention will be delivered to learners. There are always possibilities for learners to fail to recognize teacher feedback as correction to their linguistic problems. Therefore, teachers need to seek a way to effectively provide corrective feedback. However, this should not be taken as a suggestion that teachers need to offer feedback in an explicit way. Especially, considering more and more classrooms become communicatively oriented, frequent use of explicit correction will not be adequate since it may interrupt the flow of communication and/or reduce learners' willingness to communicate. Thus, it is necessary to employ various types of feedback adequate tailored to the specific situation of each classroom. For instance, when teachers treat morphological errors, a more explicit and less confusing feedback may be appropriate. In contrast, phonological errors or lexical errors could be successfully treated using a less explicit way.

In order to conclude the study, a couple of major weaknesses of the study need to be pointed out. First, the current study documented learner perception via stimulated recall. Due to the retrospective nature of stimulated recall, there is no guarantee that the recall comments elicited during the recall interview were entirely the thoughts the learners had at the time the feedback was provided. Rather, some of their comments may be second thoughts they had when they were interviewed. In addition, the study did not examine how learners' perception of teacher corrective intention was related to their L2 development. This issue deserves a further investigation to look into an association between learner perception and L2 development.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: Adults EFL learners

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