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Corrective Feedback Interventions and EFL Learners' Pronunciation: A Case of –s or –es Ending Words

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Abstract
This quasi-experimental study aimed to investigate the impact of two corrective feedback techniques (recasts and prompts) on students' performance in pronunciation. Seventy-two students from SAMA High School in Ardabil were assigned as the participants of this study. The data were collected from 3 classroom-based studies; the two experimental conditions – one received corrective feedback in the form of recasts and the other in the form of prompts – and a control group. The instructional intervention, which was spread over a period of two weeks, targeted the final –s and –es endings pronunciation, a difficult aspect of English pronunciation for these learners. To measure the students' prior knowledge of the targeted pronunciation, a pre-test was designed. Immediate post-tests were administrated after the treatments. Delayed post-tests were administrated 2 weeks after the immediate post-test. Fill-in-the-blank, oral picture-description, and read-aloud tasks formed the materials of this study. Comparison of group means across testing sessions using a one-way and repeated measure ANOVA consistently revealed that corrective feedback conditions had a positive effect on the learners' pronunciation accuracy. The effects of recasts were greater than those of prompts for increasing accuracy in the targeted pronunciation of final English –s and –es ending words.

Keywords: Corrective feedback, Recasts, Prompts, Pronunciation, Oral accuracy.

1. Introduction

The last decades in second language teaching and learning have been dominated by communicative language teaching methods and interactionist theories, respectively. Since the adoption of these approaches, interaction has become paramount in courseware products as the best tool to develop the learner's L2 communicative skills. Although it seems obvious that oral proficiency should play an important role within such a language curriculum, training of oral skills is still often neglected in traditional classroom instruction. The main reason for this is that it requires prolonged practice and the provision of feedback on individual problems, two tasks which are extremely time-consuming and therefore difficult to implement with class-based instruction (Ehsani & Knodt, 1998).

In a descriptive classroom study with adult learners of French as foreign language, Doughty (1994) observed variety of different types of teacher feedback and found that the most frequent were clarification requests, repetitions, and recasts. An examination of learners' responses to the feedback revealed that learners did not respond to any of the oral CF types but that when they did, it was most often to a recast. Recasts have been the focus of considerable research on the effects of corrective feedback on oral production. Other descriptive classroom studies (e.g., Lochtman, 2000; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Panova & Lyster, 2002) investigating different corrective feedback types have also observed that the most frequently used was recasts. However, in these studies recasts were found to be the least likely to lead to learner uptake.

Instead, uptake was more likely to occur in other CF types (e.g., elicitation, clarification requests, or metalinguistic cues). It is important to note that all of above studies examined learners' immediate responses to feedback rather than its effect on learning over time.

An increasing number of experimental studies on effects of different CF types on oral production have been carried out on both laboratory and classroom contexts. Doughty and Varela (1998) examined the use of corrective feedback within the context of middle school content-based ESL science class and found that students who received CF (via corrective recasts) from their teacher on specific language forms exhibited greater oral accuracy and development than students who did not receive CF. Advantages for CF in the form of recasts have also been observed in experimental laboratory studies (Iwashita, 2003; Long, Inagaki, & Ortega, 1998; Mackey, 1999; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Philp, 2003).

An increasing number of Second and Foreign Language studies show that Corrective Feedback (CF) plays a role in SL and in FL learning and the relative effectiveness of different types of CF continues to attract the researchers' attention in the field of language learning. Mistakes are one reason that why language learning is seen as a difficult and threatening process for most students. When the students construct their mental grammar and pronunciation for English, most of the time they struggle with the grammar and pronunciation rules, which cause the mistakes that need to assistance to specify. In EFL classrooms, the assistance mainly comes from the teachers. Teachers are often afraid of their students making errors. Making errors are a natural and unavoidable part of the process of learning and most teachers would agree that we need to correct errors to help students learn the correct forms of the language. The researchers have claimed that feedback provided during the classroom teaching/learning process, facilitates the learning. CF is provided to learners in response to their production problems with questions, plurals, and past tense forms, for example. Ammar (2008) conducted the quasi-experimental study, by using an oral picture-description task, revealed that prompts and recasts are more effective than no feedback and that prompts may be more effective than recasts in leading to SL morphosyntactic development especially for low-proficient learners.

Lyster (1998) reports phonological errors (e.g., mispronunciation, addition of other elements, pronunciation of silent letters, etc.) and grammatical errors (e.g., genders, tenses, verb morphology, negative form, etc.) that often lead the teacher to use the recast technique. However, lexical errors (e.g., inappropriate choice of items, incorrect derivations, etc.) seem to lead the teacher to negotiate the form. In this study, the focus is on the pronunciation problems to examine the role of two CF techniques – recasts and prompts in students' target language pronunciation in a foreign language classroom setting.

Pronunciation is never an end in itself but a means to negotiate meaning in discourse. People learn pronunciation of their language by imitation, but when it comes to a second or foreign language they may not learn it in the same way or need the same instruction. They may benefit from specific techniques. Drawing the learners' attention to similarities of sounds, like /b/ and /p/, can be helpful for them when they have problems in using these sounds. In order to help the learners, the CF techniques such as recasts and prompts are likely beneficial. If the learner is shown how a sound may differ from similar sounds, the learning task becomes somehow conceptual and s/he can remember and use them in the future. Pronunciation problems will of course vary greatly from one country to another. Common problems, which are likely to occur in our context, are as follows:

> Difficulty in pronouncing sounds which do not exist in the students own language, e.g., for many students the consonant / ð / (in 'the') and the vowel /ɜ:ʳ/ (in 'bird'); confusion of similar sounds, e.g., / i: / and / ɪ /, or /b/ and /p/; use of simple vowels instead of diphthongs, e.g., / i: / instead of / ɪəʳ/; difficulty in pronouncing consonant clusters, e.g. /desks/, /fifθ /.

The present study was designed to examine how using the two CF techniques – recasts and prompts – affect the learners' performance in different pronunciation of the English final –s or –es ending words, the phonological errors, where most of the students have difficulty in exact pronouncing them. The type and way of giving CF for the students' mistakes in pronunciation are two important categories that we have examined in present study.

The phonological errors were targeted in this study by examining the probable mispronunciation of the final –s or –es different pronunciations at the end of the English words, where there is less or no evidence of such a work in Iran with the participants in high school level. Therefore, the need for a study to examine the recasts and prompts' different effects on students' pronunciation in our context and with our own students with their special background knowledge is somehow obvious. To do so, in this study we were to figure out if the corrective feedback techniques would be effective on students' pronunciation accuracy and if there would be any difference in terms of the use one type of CF than the other one. Finally, the extent to which corrective feedback affects the students' accuracy of pronunciation of final –s or –es endings is another concern of this study.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Background on Corrective Feedback

One of the basic theoretical claims on which the notions of corrective feedback and uptake have been developed is the Output Hypothesis suggested by Swain (1985). The Output Hypothesis was proposed based on Swain's observation of French immersion classrooms, where grade school students learn French through content-based classes. In her observation, the students in the French immersion classrooms had little difficulties in comprehending teachers' instructions given in French, but their production often lacked accuracy. Consequently, Swain proposed the Output Hypothesis, which stated that comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985) alone does not improve learners' language acquisition in terms of syntax, and that the production of output in response to input is necessary for further language development. With regard to learner production, Swain emphasized the importance of the role of modified output, arguing that it is necessary for second language mastery. Swain further suggested that modified output could be the result of ample opportunities for output and the provision of useful and consistent feedback from teachers and peers. Later, she proposed that modified output is the representation of "the leading edge of a learner's interlanguage" (Swain, 1995, p. 131).

Another theoretical basis for discussing the effectiveness of corrective feedback can be found in the argument that language learning may require negative evidence, or information about what is ungrammatical. Regarding the learnability argument that comprehensible input may not be sufficient for acquisition, researchers such as White (1987, 1989) have argued for a need for negative evidence if second language learners' aim is to attain native-like proficiency. Negative evidence is considered effective when learner hypotheses based on L1 structure lead to L2 overgeneralizations that are impossible to overcome on the basis of positive evidence alone (Long, 1996). As negative evidence is given in response to erroneous forms that learners produce it can take the form of corrective feedback in the context of classroom interaction.

Learner uptake is considered worth examining in relation to the notions of attention (Logan, 1988) and noticing (Schmidt, 1990, 1995). Logan stated that, in the course of language learning, attention is necessary and sufficient for extracting items, that is, linguistic input, from a stimulus array. When this claim is extended to the discussion on how to determine which items students have attended to, it may be pointed out that uptake is one way of showing which items learners have attended to in the preceding corrective feedback. Similarly, Schmidt (1995) proposed the notion of noticing as a subjective manifestation of attention, and also asserted that noticing is a necessary and sufficient condition for converting input to intake. Although there

has been no research that explicitly demonstrates that uptake is an oral manifestation of noticing, it may well be speculated that there are some noticed linguistic features involved in learners' uptake. For this reason, it is worthwhile to examine uptake as a possible indicator of language development.

2.2 Empirical Background on Corrective Feedback

Lyster and Izquierdo (2009) researched the differential effects of prompts and recasts on the acquisition of grammatical gender. The results showed both groups significantly improved accuracy, irrespective of feedback type. They concluded that learners receiving recasts had benefited from the repeated exposure to positive exemplars as well as from opportunities to infer negative evidence, while learners receiving prompts had benefited from the repeated exposure to negative evidence as well as from opportunities to produce modified output.

Sheen (2007) compared the effects of recasts and a type of feedback which included correct forms and the explanation (e.g., "You should use the definite article "the" because you've already mentioned "fox") on English articles. Participants who received the latter type of feedback significantly outperformed the recast and control groups, whereas the recast group did not perform significantly better than the control group. She concluded "the more informative type of correction resulted in the acquisition of articles whereas simply providing learners with the correct form through recasts did not" (p. 318).

Ammar and Spada (2006) compared prompts with recasts in form-focused instruction in three sixth-grade intensive ESL classrooms over a 4-week period. Results showed that all three groups benefited from the form-focused instruction, and that the two feedback groups benefited the most, outperforming the control group on posttests. The group receiving prompts significantly outperformed the recasts group. What is more interesting in the study is that the effectiveness of recasts depended on the learners‟ proficiency. High-proficiency learners benefited equally from both prompts and recasts, while low-proficiency learners benefited significantly more from prompts than recasts. They concluded that the effectiveness of any corrective feedback technique needed to be evaluated in relation to learners' proficiency levels.

In relation to Schmidt's (1995) idea that noticing facilitates the acquisition of input, Long (1996) examined the context in which noticing could occur, and argued that selective attention can be paid most effectively during negotiation for meaning. Moreover, he maintained that feedback obtained during negotiation work might be facilitative of the L2 development in vocabulary, morphology, and syntax. That is, negotiating communication difficulties creates comprehensible input, which contains salient linguistic features that learners could notice more easily than other features. This claim might also support the notion of the effectiveness of the feedback-uptake sequence, especially when feedback focuses on linguistic errors and gives learners an opportunity to negotiate with their interlocutors what was incorrect in their original utterances.

Corrective feedback and learner uptake have often been observed and examined in the realm of classroom research, and one of the major motivations for investigating the sequence of corrective feedback and uptake was to identify patterns of error treatment in different classroom settings. The discussions on how error treatment should be given have developed in the field of classroom SLA (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Chaudron, 1988; DeKeyser, 1993). The issues discussed include when, which, and how errors should be corrected, as well as whether learners' errors should be corrected at all. Among the examined issues, the question of whether learners should be corrected has been investigated in studies such as Carroll, Roberge, and Swain (1992) and Carroll and Swain (1993), both of which dealt with the provision of corrective feedback on certain linguistic forms, in a controlled experimental setting. The study of Carroll et al. (1992) examined adult French learners who were trained in use of French suffixation rules and given feedback on their misuse. Carroll and Swain (1993), on the other hand, investigated adult English learners who were given different kinds of feedback while

learning the English dative alternation rule. These studies attempted to look at the effect of feedback on learners' misuse of certain linguistic forms, but due to the nature of the research, they did not reveal possible effects of error treatment in communicative language classrooms.
Suzuki (2002) investigated the relationship between corrective feedback and learner uptake in adult ESL classrooms. The results showed both similarities and differences to those in Lyster and Ranta's (1997) study. While the distribution of types of corrective feedback following learner errors showed no major difference from that reported by Lyster and Ranta, the ratio of uptake following certain corrective feedback types greatly differed from their results.
Naini (2008) explored the effects of form-focused instruction and feedback type on learning. The learners in treatment group received corrective feedback in the form of prompts, including clarification requests, repetitions, elicitations, and meta-linguistic clues while the learners in the control group received the same instruction as the experimental group without any kind of feedback. The participants were assigned different tasks in order to use the aimed structures during the 15 treatment sessions (30 hours). She found the outperformance of the participants in experimental group over the performance of the participants in control group.
A close examination of recent research can nevertheless help to identify some of the factors that affect L2 pronunciation most significantly and to derive some general guidelines for the teaching of pronunciation. Various studies have revealed that pronunciation learning is affected by a number of variables such as L1, level of education, age on arrival (for naturalistic settings), amount of use of L1 and L2, motivation for learning L2, etc. (Celce-Murcia, et al. 1996; Flege, 1995). These are all factors that can vary from person to person and that cannot be manipulated by the teacher to produce the desired learning outcomes.
However, there are other variables that are also known to affect pronunciation learning and that can be blended so as to obtain better results. These are input, output and feedback. Here we focus on the feedback provided for the language learners.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The present study compares the effectiveness of two types of Corrective Feedback techniques (recasts and prompts) on students' target language pronunciation. One group received CF in the form of recasts (recast group), the other group received CF in the form of prompts (prompt group) and the third group had no opportunity to practice the two CF techniques and, thus, received no feedback (control group). The relative effectiveness of two types of CF techniques was assessed by a fill-in-the-blank task, picture-description task, and read-aloud task. There were three testing times: a pretest, an immediate posttest, and a delayed posttest on all three tasks. The target pronunciation was final –s or –es ending words' different pronunciations.
Corrective feedback can be broadly defined as responses to learner utterances that contain an error. Different types of feedback presumably have a different impact on the acquisition process. Lyster and Ranta (1997) distinguished six types in their often-cited classroom observation study:
Explicit feedback: teacher provides the correct form and clearly indicates that what the student said was incorrect.
S: He comes/s/ back home at 12:30. (Phonological error)
T: No, he comes/z/ back home at 12:30. (Explicit feedback)
Recasts: the teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance, minus the error.
S: She watches/z/ TV every day. (Phonological error)
T: Okay, watches/ɪz/. (Recasts)
Clarification requests: question indicating that the utterance has been misunderstood or ill-formed and that a repetition or reformulation is required.
S: Ali goes/ɪz/ to school every morning. (Phonological error)

T: Sorry. (Clarification requests)

Metalinguistic feedback: contains either comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the student's utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form.

S: The teacher teaches/z/ English. (Phonological error)

T: No. (Metalinguistic feedback)

Elicitation: teachers try to elicit the correct form by asking for completion of a sentence, or asking questions, or asking for a reformulation.

S: David learns/ɪz/ Arabic. (Phonological error)

T: David…….(Elicitation)

S: David learns/z/ Arabic.

Repetition: the teacher's repetition, in isolation, of the erroneous utterance.

S: He sleeps/z/ at 9:30 every night. (Phonological error)

T: No, He sleeps/s/ at 9:30 every night. (Repetition)

3.2 Participants

The participants in present study were high school students who were learning English as a Foreign Language; they were bilingual in Azari-Turkish and Persian. Seventy-two students from SAMA high school in Ardabil within three groups participated in the study. All the participants were first graders of high school in the second half of the school year. At the time of the research, they all had already studied English in public school for 2 to 4 hours weekly for approximately four years, as is typical in formal education settings in Iran. The ages of the learners ranged from 14-16, with an average age of 15. The participants attended the classes twice a week that were held in the afternoon. The Key English Test (KET) was used to assess the placement and homogeneity of the students. The majority of the students placed in Elementary level at this proficiency test. Through KET, the groups were found to be homogeneous since there was no significant difference between their performances. The use of two types of Corrective Feedback (CF) techniques – namely recasts and prompts – in pronunciation was the focus of the present study. The participants were divided into three groups and they were randomly assigned to one of three treatment groups where one group responded only with recasts, the second group relied on prompts and the third group with no corrective feedback.

3.3 Materials

3.3.1 The Key English Test

The Cambridge level one Key English Test (KET) was used for homogenizing the classroom participants. It includes reading and writing, listening, and speaking components. The assessment aims of KET and its syllabus was designed to ensure that the test reflects the use of language in real life and it offers a basic qualification and examines the general level of English proficiency of learners.

3.3.2 The Fill-in-the-Blank

The fill-in-the-blank task with twenty blanks was used. Here the learners read the sentences with missing pronunciation of final –s or –es endings. The pronunciation sounds corresponded to different pronunciation of –s or –es, i.e., /s/, /z/ and /ɪz/. After reading the sentences, the students were asked to fill the blanks based on the correct pronunciation of final –s or –es endings. Students were required to choose from three possible options to fill in the blanks.

3.3.3 The Oral Picture-Description Task

In this part the participants were given two pictures of a story related to a student's daily schedule through which the learners were supposed to describe the pictures in the present tense and complete the story. They had 3 to 5 minutes to do the task. Here the purpose was on producing the –s or –es ending words which were supposed to be replete in this tense.

3.3.4 The Read-Aloud Task

In this part the participants were given three reading passages adopted and expanded from Mirhassani and Alavi (2006), by paying attention to their final –s or –es endings pronunciation. These readings were chosen because the high frequency of those sounds.

3.3.5 Target Structure

The different pronunciations of final –s or –es ending at the end of English language words, were the target of this study; the phonological errors are among those kinds of errors that most of the learners in Iran, especially in elementary level, have difficulty in exact pronouncing them. The different pronunciations of final –s or –es endings in English language words, i.e., /s/, /z/ and /ɪz/, are at the source of this difficulty; the following examples illustrate these differences:

/s/ after /p/, /f/, /k/, /t/	as: pets, forks
/z/ after /s/, /z/, /ch/, /sh/, /x/	as: buses, watches
/ɪz/ after other sounds	as: girls, pens

3.4 Design

There were a pre-test, four treatment sessions, immediate post-tests, and after two weeks from posttest administration the delayed post-test, which spanned around 6 weeks. The pre-test was given in the first week, two weeks treatments and in the fourth week the immediate post-tests. After two weeks the delayed post-test was given to the students. After the intervention of the treatment and administration of tests, the answer sheets were marked (by trained raters) and were used for future analyses. The independent variable was corrective feedback with three levels: a) recast group (+recast –prompts), b) prompt group (–recast +prompts), and c) control group (–recast –prompts); the dependent variable was students' pronunciation accuracy.

Accordingly, this study followed the pretest, treatment, immediate posttest, and delayed posttest design.

3.5 Procedures and Data Collection

3.5.1 The Placement Test

The first two weeks of the study was completely devoted to the placement test administration taken by KET in which the participants took part in written and oral parts of the test. KET has three papers covering the four skills. The reading and writing component carries 50% of the final marks; the Listening and Speaking components carry 25% each. The time allotted for the Listening (5 parts), Reading (5 parts), Writing (3 parts), and Speaking (2 parts) was 105 minutes to administer. Two examiners conducted the placement test.

3.5.2 The Pretest

In order to obtain the beginning statistics of the study, participants took part in three different sets of tasks, i.e., picture-description, fill-in-the-blank, and read-aloud. Each task was administered separately. In picture-description task participants were provided with some pictures which showed the daily routine of some characters where the frequency of –s or –es ending words were high. In fill-in-the-blank part the participants were supposed to fill the 20 blanks based on the final different –s or –es pronunciations (/s/, /z/, /Iz/). In read-aloud task the participants were asked to read the provided passages where the emphasis was on pronouncing the –s or –es ending words. It is worth mentioning that all the pre-tests procedure were tape-recorded and transcribed for further analyses.

3.5.3 The Treatment Sessions

In these sessions, all participants took part in instruction part of the study in which they were exposed to the teaching of different pronunciation of –s or –es ending words through three different tasks, namely picture description, fill-in-the-blank, and read-aloud. After teaching the target structure and making the learners aware of the reasons behind having different sounds at the end of –s or –es ending words, participants were provided with the materials in the form of a series of different pictures to be described, a fill-in-the-blank passage, and a reading passage provided by the teacher and they were asked to complete the tasks. During doing the tasks

prompts and recasts were applied as the corrective feedback techniques on the learners' erroneous utterance with whole class attending. Treatment sessions lasted for two weeks and corrective feedbacks were provided in every session. On the other side of the study, i.e., control group, learners were faced no treatment in the form of corrective feedback, rather they only benefited from the instructions provided by the teacher.

3.5.4 The Immediate Posttest

After the instruction sessions, all the participants took part in the immediate posttest of the study. In this phase, the individual learners were given three tasks in three different sessions to check their obtained knowledge of different pronunciations of –s or –es ending words. Their voices were recorded in each session for further analysis. The tasks were cautiously selected and it was made sure that most of the difficult words in them had been taught during treatment sessions. It was to control the problem of vocabulary load in checking the learners' structure use.

3.5.5 The Delayed Posttest

After an interval of two weeks, the participants attended the delayed posttest of the study and the results were recorded for further analysis. The procedures used in this phase were the same but the tasks were different. We exchanged the tasks between the experimental and control groups. Delayed posttest was administered to control the probable effect of time on learning. To control for the test-retest effect, three different sets of tasks were used for each testing session, i.e., pre-test, immediate posttest, and delayed posttest.

3.6 Measures

To score the placement test, an appropriate answer key was used. The results obtained from pre-tests in three tasks were scored by two trained raters. To score the accuracy of target structure in the tasks, the number of correct answers was divided by the total number of items and the final scores were considered as the accuracy score for individual tasks.

Numerical values of accuracy = (number of correct items)/(total number of the items)×100

The obtained results were plugged into the SPSS, one-way ANOVA, for further analysis. In addition, a post hoc analysis was run on immediate and delayed post-tests. The next two chapters are devoted to the ways of analyzing and description of data and pedagogical implications.

4. Data Analyses and Results

4.1 Introduction

As it was mentioned in previous sections, an attempt was made to find out if corrective feedback in the form of prompts and recasts has any role in English language learners' oral accuracy. At the same time it has been important to figure out which kind of corrective feedback treatments was more effective than the other. To check the aforementioned issues the English –s or –es ending words have been chosen as the target feature of the study. We were very keen on finding out if corrective feedback in the form of prompts and recasts would be effective in learning the pronunciation of English –s or –es ending words.

To analyze the obtained data we used the one-way ANOVA with the corrective feedback conditions, i.e., –prompts –recasts, –prompts +recasts, and +prompt –recasts, as independent variables and English –s or –es ending words as dependent variable. For the purpose of these analyses the alpha level was set at $p<.05$.

4.2 Analyses and Results

Following the end of the data collection period, the data, which consisted of the students' oral and written tasks and the teacher-provided corrective feedback techniques – recasts and prompts – were transcribed and students' responses on the picture-description, read-aloud and the fill-in-the-blank tasks were scored. After the coding and scoring procedures, the obtained data were plugged into SPSS and the descriptive and inferential statistics were carried out.

A one-way ANOVA was run on the data obtained from the beginning tests to get the homogeneity of all participants. Another one-way ANOVA was run on the pre- and post-tests to clarify the probable relationship between the three groups of the study. A Post Hoc analysis was run on the post tests to figure out where the differences among the groups would occur. The results obtained from these analyses are presented in the subsequent sections.

Table 4.1. Descriptive statistics (test of homogeneity)

	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error
Prompt	24	61.08	11.58	2.36
Recast	24	60.25	9.80	2.001
Control	24	59.58	12.55	2.56
Total	72	60.30	11.22	1.32

Table 4.1 shows the descriptive statistics obtained from analyzing the very beginning test which was administered for the purpose of homogenizing the participants of the study.

Table 4.2. Levene's test of homogeneity of variances

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.555	2	69	.577

Table 4.2 shows the Levene's test of homogeneity for the participants of study. It can be seen from the table that the Sig. value is larger than the alpha level of $p<.05$, which shows that the participants were homogeneous.

Table 4.3. Descriptive statistics (picture description)

		N	Mean	SD	Std. Error
Pretest	Prompts	24	62.33	12.96	2.64
	Recasts	24	59.87	13.41	2.73
	Control	24	60.12	11.66	2.38
	Total	72	60.77	12.57	1.48
Immediate posttest	Prompts	24	71.00	13.76	2.80
	Recasts	24	74.50	16.39	3.34
	Control	24	61.54	13.41	2.73
	Total	72	69.01	15.39	1.81
Delayed posttest	Prompts	24	62.16	10.86	2.21
	Recasts	24	65.25	14.50	2.96
	Control	24	62.25	15.95	3.25
	Total	72	63.22	13.82	1.62

As it can be seen in table 4.3, descriptive statistics obtained from analyzing the data from each group show the mean, standard deviation, and number of participants in each group in pre-test.

Table 4.4. Test of homogeneity of variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Pretest	.167	2	69	.847
Immediate posttest	1.05	2	69	.355
Delayed posttest	2.20	2	69	.118

We, then, check the Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances box to see if we have violated the assumption of homogeneity of variances. Table 4.4 shows that the Sig. values for pre-test, immediate post-test, and delayed post-test in picture description task are all larger than alpha level of *.05 (p>.05)* and so we have not violated the assumption of homogeneity of variances.

Table 4.5. One-way ANOVA (picture description)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pretest	Between Groups	87.861	2	43.931	.272	.763	.007
	Within Groups	11136.583	69	161.400			
	Total	11224.444	71				
Immediate post-test	Between Groups	2157.028	2	1078.514	5.070	.009	.128
	Within Groups	14677.958	69	212.724			
	Total	16834.986	71				
Delayed post-test	Between Groups	148.111	2	74.056	.381	.685	.01
	Within Groups	13414.333	69	194.411			
	Total	13562.444	71				

Table 4.5 shows the between and within group effects obtained from one-way ANOVA. This table shows that the Sig. values in pre-test and delayed post-test are *.763* and *.685*, respectively. Therefore, the values are larger than the alpha level of *.05* and so their effects are not statistically significant. The Sig. value in immediate post-test is less than the alpha level of *.05* and it is statistically significant. The partial eta squared analysis for immediate post-test is *.128* which shows a large effect.

Table 4.6. Multiple comparisons (Tukey HSD)

Group 1	Group 2	Mean Difference (1-2)	Std. Error	Sig.
Prompts	Recasts	-12.70*	3.96	.006
	Control	15.41*	3.96	.001
Recasts	Prompts	12.70*	3.96	.006
	Control	28.12*	3.96	.000
Control	Prompts	-15.41*	3.96	.001
	Recasts	-28.12*	3.96	.000

Table 4.6 shows the results obtained from the Multiple Comparisons (Post Hoc) analysis. Post hoc Tukey performed on the significant findings for feedback conditions in immediate and delayed post-tests.

In picture description task, there was a statistically significant difference at $p<.05$ in immediate post-tests: $F(2, 69) = 5.07, p = .009$. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for group 1 *(M = 71.00, SD = 13.76)* was statistically different from group 3 *(M = 61.54, SD = 13.41)*. The mean score for group 2 *(M = 74.50, SD = 16.39)* was

statistically different from group 3 *(M = 61.54, SD = 13.41)*. The mean scores for group 1 and 2 were also statistically different.

According to Tukey tests, in immediate post-test, prompt group outperformed control group, recast group worked better than control group, and finally recast group outperformed prompt group.

Table 4.7. Descriptive statistics (fill in the blank)

		N	Mean	SD	Std. Error
Pretest	Prompts	24	53.75	12.35	2.52
	Recasts	24	54.37	11.16	2.27
	Control	24	53.12	8.31	1.69
	Total	72	53.75	10.60	1.25
Immediate posttest	Prompts	24	71.25	17.70	3.61
	Recasts	24	83.95	13.75	2.80
	Control	24	55.83	7.89	1.61
	Total	72	70.34	17.80	2.09
Delayed posttest	Prompts	24	76.45	15.77	3.22
	Recasts	24	78.33	16.39	3.34
	Control	24	56.04	9.08	1.85
	Total	72	70.27	17.25	2.03

Table 4.7 shows the descriptive statistics for fill-in-the-blank task. The table shows the number of participants, the mean, and the standard deviation in each group.

Table 4.8. One-way ANOVA (fill in the blank)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pretest	Between Groups	18.750	2	9.375	.081	.922	.002
	Within Groups	7968.750	69	115.489			
	Total	7987.500	71				
Immediate posttest	Between Groups	9521.528	2	4760.764	25.279	.000	.422
	Within Groups	12994.792	69	188.330			
	Total	22516.319	71				
Delayed posttest	Between Groups	7338.194	2	3669.097	18.337	.000	.347
	Within Groups	13806.250	69	200.091			
	Total	21144.444	71				

Table 4.8 shows the between and within group effects obtained from one-way ANOVA. This table shows that the Sig. value in pre-test is *.922*. Therefore, the value is larger than the alpha level of *.05* and so its effect is not statistically significant. The Sig. value in immediate post-test and delayed post-test are both *.000*, which are less than the alpha level of *.05* and the differences are statistically significant. The partial eta squared for immediate and delayed post-tests are *.42* and *.34*, respectively, which show a large effect.

Table 4.9. Multiple comparisons (Tukey HSD)

	Group 1	Group 2	Mean Difference (1-2)	Std. Error	Sig.
Immediate posttest	Prompts	Recasts	-12.70833*	3.96159	.006
		Control	15.41667*	3.96159	.001
	Recasts	Prompts	12.70833*	3.96159	.006
		Control	28.12500*	3.96159	.000
	Control	Prompts	-15.41667*	3.96159	.001
		Recasts	-28.12500*	3.96159	.000
Delayed posttest	Prompts	Recasts	-1.87500	4.08341	.890
		Control	20.41667*	4.08341	.000
	Recasts	Prompts	1.87500	4.08341	.890
		Control	22.29167*	4.08341	.000
	Control	Prompts	-20.41667*	4.08341	.000
		Recasts	-22.29167*	4.08341	.000

Table 4.9 shows the results obtained from the Multiple Comparisons (Post hoc) analysis. Post hoc Tukey was performed on the significant findings for feedback conditions in immediate and delayed post-tests.

In fill-in-the-blank task there was a statistically significant difference at $p<.05$ in immediate post-tests: $F\ (2, 69) = 25.27, p = .00$, and delayed post-tests: $F\ (2, 69) = 18.33, p = .00$. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for group 1 in immediate post-test *(M = 71.25, SD = 17.70)* was statistically different from group 3 *(M = 55.83, SD = 7.89)*. The mean score for group 2 *(M = 83.9583, SD = 13.75)* was statistically different from group 3 *(M = 55.83, SD = 7.89)*. The mean score for group 1 and 2 is also statistically significant. In delayed post-tests post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for group 1 *(M = 76.4583, SD = 15.77)* was statistically different from group 3 *(M = 56.0417, SD = 9.08)*. The mean score for group 2 *(M = 78.33, SD = 16.39)* was statistically significant. This analysis doesn't show any statistically significance between the mean scores for group 1 and 2.

According to Tukey tests, in immediate post-test, prompt group outperformed control group, recast group worked better than control group, and finally recast group outperformed prompt group.

Table 4.10. Descriptive statistics (read aloud)

		N	Mean	SD	Std. Error
Pretest	Prompts	24	55.75	17.17	3.50
	Recasts	24	56.20	18.11	3.69
	Control	24	54.33	15.74	3.21
	Total	72	55.43	16.81	1.98
Immediate posttest	Prompts	24	68.79	20.58	4.20
	Recasts	24	73.50	20.14	4.11
	Control	24	56.12	23.78	4.85
	Total	72	66.13	22.50	2.65
Delayed posttest	Prompts	24	64.00	23.66	4.83
	Recasts	24	65.79	18.30	3.73
	Control	24	59.33	25.60	5.22
	Total	72	63.04	22.58	2.66

Table 4.10 shows the descriptive statistics for read-aloud task. The table shows the number of participants, the mean, and the standard deviation in each group.

We, then, check the Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances box to see if we have violated the assumption of homogeneity of variances.

Table 4.11. Test of homogeneity of variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Pretest	.418	2	69	.660
Immediate posttest	.688	2	69	.506
Delayed posttest	2.384	2	69	.100

Table 4.11 shows that the Sig. values for pre-test, immediate post-test, and delayed post-test in read-aloud task are all larger than alpha level of *.05 (p>.05)* and so we have not violated the assumption of homogeneity of variances.

Table 4.12. One-way ANOVA (read aloud)

		Sum of Squares	df	MS	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pretest	Between Groups	45.861	2	22.931	.079	.924	.002
	Within Groups	20037.792	69	290.403			
	Total	20083.653	71				
Immediate posttest	Between Groups	3876.028	2	1938.014	4.167	.020	.10
	Within Groups	32090.583	69	465.081			
	Total	35966.611	71				
Delayed posttest	Between Groups	533.583	2	266.792	.516	.599	.014
	Within Groups	35675.292	69	517.033			
	Total	36208.875	71				

Table 4.12 shows the between and within groups effects obtained from one-way ANOVA. This table shows that the Sig. values in pre-test and delayed post-test are *.924* and *.599*, respectively. Therefore, the values are larger than the alpha level of *.05* and so their effects are not statistically significant. The Sig. value in immediate post-test is less than the alpha level of *.05* and it is statistically significant. The partial eta squared for immediate post-test is *.1* which shows a large effect.

Table 4.13. Multiple comparisons (Tukey HSD)

Dependent Variable	Group 1	Group 2	Mean Difference (1-2)	Std. Error	Sig.
Immediate post-test	Prompts	Recasts	-4.70833	6.22549	.731
		Control	12.66667	6.22549	.112
	Recasts	Prompts	4.70833	6.22549	.731
		Control	17.37500*	6.22549	.018
	Control	Prompts	-12.66667	6.22549	.112
		Recasts	-17.37500*	6.22549	.018

Table 4.13 shows the results obtained from the Multiple Comparisons (Post hoc) analysis. Post hoc Tukey was performed on the significant findings for feedback conditions in immediate and delayed post-tests.

In read-aloud task there was a statistically significant difference at $p<.05$ in immediate post-tests: $F(2, 69) = 4.16$, $p = .02$. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for group 1 *(M = 68.79, SD = 20.58)* was statistically different from group 3 *(M = 56.12, SD = 23.78)*. The mean score for group 2 *(M = 73.50, SD = 20.14)* was statistically different from group 3 *(M = 56.12, SD = 23.78)*. The difference between group 1 and group 2 was not statistically different.

According to Tukey tests, in immediate post-test, the difference between prompt and control groups was not statistically significant. Recast group worked better than control group, and finally recast group outperformed prompt group.

4.3 Summary of the Results

Analyses of the results obtained from descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, and Post hoc Tukey tests provide us with information to interpret the results of this study. The results obtained from feedback conditions in pre-tests, immediate posttests, and delayed posttests revealed that the two kinds of corrective feedback had a positive effect on students' target language pronunciation accuracy. Both experimental groups outperformed control group. Although in some cases the effect of CF in delayed post-tests was not statistically significant.

Comparing the mean scores of both prompt and recast groups in different sets of tests, we saw that recast group outperformed prompt group and the one-way ANOVA showed that the difference in the mean scores was statistically significant at alpha level of *.o5*.

Analyses of Partial Eta squared in the significant parts of ANOVA showed a large effect of corrective feedback conditions on pronunciation accuracy measured by three different tasks, i.e., picture description, fill-in-the-blank and read-aloud.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Over the last decades, there has been an increasing interest in researching corrective feedback in second language acquisition, and several definitions have been offered since then. The role and importance of corrective feedback has been debated in both theoretical and pedagogical grounds. Whereas some language acquisition theories and second language teaching methodologies question the use of corrective feedback, there are others which favor its use and see it as beneficial. Teachers of second or foreign languages, however, sometimes are unaware of these issues and their view towards corrective feedback and, consequently, their practice in the classroom can be affected.

Prompts and recasts can be seen as complementary moves with different purposes for different learners in different discourse contexts. Teachers can use one or the other in accordance with their students' language abilities and content knowledge, without abandoning one at the expense of the other (Lyster, 2002a). Recasts are ideal for facilitating the delivery of complex subject matter because they provide supportive, scaffolded help, which serves to move lessons ahead when the target forms in question are beyond the students' current abilities. At the same time, recasts serve as exemplars of positive evidence (Braidi, 2002; Leeman, 2003) and, as such, can be expected to facilitate the encoding of new target representations when they occur in appropriate discourse contexts. Prompts, on the other hand, in their overt aim to elicit modified output without providing any exemplar of positive evidence, serve to improve control over already internalized forms by assisting learners in the transition of declarative to procedural knowledge (de Bot, 1996; Lyster, 2004). Recasts and prompts thus elicit different types of learner responses – identified in classroom studies as different types of learner uptake and repair.

Recasts and prompts differ not only in terms of whether the target forms are given but also in the types of evidence provided. Nicholas, Lightbown, and Spada (2001) argued that recasts afford learners with positive evidence, but whether negative evidence is also provided is less clear. Other researchers (e.g., Egi, 2008; Ellis & Sheen, 2006) believe that whether recasts provide positive evidence, negative evidence, or both largely depends on learners' perceptions, which, in turn, determine the effectiveness of recasts. It has been argued that by providing positive evidence in classroom input, recasts may help learners establish new knowledge. Prompts, in contrast, aim to provide negative evidence because they signal that the learners' utterance is problematic. The self-repair process is claimed to help learners to reanalyze what has already been learned (at some level) and to restructure their interlanguage (Lyster, 2002b). To address the aforementioned issues, some research questions were posited in this study, which are dealt with here in detail. In the present study, a one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of corrective feedback in the form of prompts and recasts on learning the English –s or –es ending words using three different measures (picture description, fill-in-the-blank, read-aloud). Subjects were divided into three groups based on the type of corrective feedback that they would be treated (group 1: prompts; group 2: recasts; group 3: control).

The results obtained from feedback conditions in pre-tests, immediate posttests, and delayed posttests revealed that the two kinds of corrective feedback had a positive effect on students' target language pronunciation accuracy. This finding is along with Lyster and Saito's (2010) findings in which the results showed that CF in the form of prompts and recasts are facilitative of L2 development and that its impact is sustained until delayed post-test. Moreover, Doughty and Varela (1998) concluded that the implementation of formed focused instruction via the use of corrective recasts in communicative classroom is effective. In another study done on written corrective feedback by Ellis, et al. (2008), the effectiveness of focused and unfocused written CF on accuracy has been proved. In delayed post-tests, though, we couldn't find statistically significant results in picture-description and read-aloud tasks. It might be due to many factors.

One explanation for this is that corrective feedbacks are differentially effective depending on the linguistic target.

Comparing the mean scores of both prompt and recast groups in different sets of tests, we saw that recast group outperformed prompt group and the one-way ANOVA showed that the difference in the mean scores was statistically significant at alpha level of *.05*. Regarding the superiority of one corrective feedback technique over the other, this study showed the opposite result in comparison with the study by Lyster and Saito (2010), that is to say recasts were superior to prompts. Recasts have been hypothesized to create ideal opportunities for learners to notice the difference between their interlanguage forms and target-like reformulations (e.g., Doughty, 2001; Long, 1996). For example, Long (1996) argued that conversational moves such as recasts benefit L2 development because they provide learners with a primary source of negative evidence. Some classroom studies conducted in a range of instructional settings have demonstrated that prompts lead to greater gains in accuracy than do recasts (Ammar & Spada, 2006; Ellis, 2007; Ellis, et al., 2006; Havranek & Cesnik, 2001; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Lyster, 2004). There are many studies which show that it depends on individual differences whether students can benefit from recasts (Nicholas, Lightbown, & Spada, 2001; Ammar & Spada, 2006; Trofimovich, Ammar, & Gatbonton, 2007). Nicholas, Lightbown, and Spada (2001) claimed that recasts can work more effectively when the learner has already begun to use a particular linguistic feature and is in a position to choose between linguistic alternatives. Moreover, it is in contrast with Yang and Lyster's (2010) study in which they believe that learners benefits more from prompts than from recasts. Laboratory studies have generally yielded positive results for recasts, but not necessarily in comparison with other clearly defined types of feedbacks (e.g., Han, 2002; Ishida, 2004; Iwashita, 2003; Long et al., 1998; Mackey & Philp, 1998; McDonough & Mackey, 2006). Leeman's (2003) study, however, which included a comparison of recasts and repetition of error without any opportunities for immediate repair, showed both feedback types to be equally effective.

Finally, analyses of Partial Eta squared in the significant parts of ANOVA showed a large effect of corrective feedback conditions on pronunciation accuracy measured by three different tasks, i.e., picture-description, fill-in-the-blank and read-aloud.

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