

The Effectiveness of Recasts in SLA

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In recent SLA research, a great number of studies have investigated the effects of recasts on interlanguage development. Recasts have attracted immense interest as a way of promoting learner's attention to form while maintaining meaning-based, communicative interaction. This study reviewed recast literature along with other corrective feedback (hereafter, CF) technique literature, finding some useful suggestions that recasts can be an effective CF for increasing focus-on-form. First, recasts can be defined not as a purely implicit negative feedback, but as an implicit-explicit continuum. Second, recasts have relative advantages compared to other CF techniques. Unlike metalinguistic explanations, recasts do not interrupt the communicative flow of negotiated interaction. Unlike prompts, recasts can give new knowledge instead of reintroducing pre-existing knowledge. Third, higher-level learners can notice and acquire the target forms more easily because of their working memory capacity. For lower-level learners, teachers can increase the saliency by reducing the length of recasts and narrowing the focus. Finally, even in large classes, recasts can be a useful and highly effective means of corrective feedback. This study, therefore, suggests that recasts can be an effective CF for improving focus-on-form while continuing negotiated interaction in EFL classrooms.

[recast/corrective feedback/focus-on-form/communicative interaction/다시 고쳐 말하기/교정적 피드백/형태초점/의사소통적 상호작용]

I. INTRODUCTION

Under the effects of communicative and content-based approaches to L2 teaching, L2 teachers have seen errors as evidence of learners' progress. It came

to be believed that errors show that learners are creatively attempting to use language beyond what they have been taught, and that without direct use of language or explicit teaching of the target language, they are expected to go through developmental stages on their way to higher levels of language proficiency. It was even argued that L2 teachers should avoid error correction (Nicholas, Lightbrown, & Spada, 2001).

On account of being influenced by such approaches, L2 learners in communicative classes continue to experience difficulties with accuracy, although they come to attain relatively high levels of comprehension ability and, to some extent, fluency in oral production (Ammar & Spada, 2006). In current research which disproves the sufficiency of comprehensible input and exclusively meaning based instruction, Schmidt (2001), in his noticing hypothesis, emphasized the necessity of drawing learners' attention to the formal properties of language to help them notice L2 forms if they are to successfully learn them. As a result, form-focused instruction has been proposed as a way of drawing learners' attention to language form in communicative classrooms.

This theoretical argument has generated considerable amount of research about CF techniques. In general, research to date has investigated which type of corrective feedback is the most effective, however, the results have showed the different findings. Among several CF techniques, such as metalinguistic explanations, prompts, and recasts, this study focuses on recasts. However, the difficulty in reviewing research on recasts is that these studies to date have utilized a variety of operational definitions of recasts and different types of settings, making comparison of the findings difficult and generalization problematic (Sheen, 2006).

For this reason, although there is a consensus among L2 teachers and researchers that a focus on the formal properties of the L2 through CF is beneficial, many of them have different ideas on what aspects of CF are effective and how to make CF work for second language development. The purpose of this study is to investigate controversies on recasts, and examine the ways to make recasts effective, especially in EFL situation.

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Furthermore, this study is focused on acquiring insights about the following questions:

- 1) Which type of CF techniques is more effective in interlanguage development, meta-linguistic explanations, prompts, or recasts?
- 2) Do recasts have to be purely implicit? What are characteristics within a recast to make it become salient for interlanguage development?
- 3) To notice the gap between the erroneous utterances and target-like recasts, do learners have to possess a high proficiency level?
- 4) Can recasts get the effects for inter-language development, especially in EFL classrooms?

II. TYPES OF CF TECHNIQUES

There are several kinds of CF techniques studied in research, with each of them having different properties. For this reason, the findings of research on which type of CF techniques is more effective compared to others are also different. However, among those conflicting research results, it is possible to extract some findings which some researches have in common. Through synthesizing some common findings in CF literature, this study has a purpose of finding out which type of CF technique is more appropriate and effective for interlanguage development, especially in EFL situations.

1. Recasts vs. Metalinguistic Feedbacks

With regard to the relative effectiveness between recasts and metalinguistic feedbacks, some researchers argued that giving metalinguistic information as an explicit negative feedback is much more effective than any other one. Carroll and Swain (1993) did an experimental study of investigating the relative effects of explicit and implicit forms of negative feedback on the acquisition of the English dative alternation. The researchers suggested that the group getting explicit metalinguistic feedbacks outperformed the other groups which were given

feedbacks such as simply telling a subject that he or she was wrong, implicit forms of negative feedbacks, and even the right forms, respectively, not to mention the control (no-treatment) group. Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006) stated that recasts as an implicit feedback are sure to give positive evidence, but not to afford negative evidence, doubting learners' conscious awareness of corrective function involved in recasts. The researchers indicated that explicit feedback can take two forms: one is explicit correction, clearly showing that what the learner said was incorrect (e.g., "No, not good - went") and therefore providing both positive and negative evidence; and the other is metalinguistic feedback to the learner's erroneous utterance, delivering only negative evidence by explanations or information related to the grammatical accuracy (e.g., "You need past tense") In their study of comparing the effectiveness between recasts and metalinguistic information, one group received implicit feedback in the form of recasts as follows:

<Example 1>

Learner: ...they saw and they follow follow follow him

Researcher: Followed

Learner: Followed him and attacked him.

On the other hand, the learners in the other group received explicit feedback in the form of metalinguistic information, as follows:

<Example 2>

Learner: He kiss her

Researcher: Kiss – you need past tense.

Learner: He kissed

Ellis et al. (2006) argued that because the metalinguistic feedback is longer (five words as opposed to one of recasts), it might have been better attended to and perceived as overtly corrective. This argument is contradicted to the findings that the shorter the recast is, the more likely it is to be noticed (Han & Kim, 2008; Loewen & Philp 2006; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Philp 2003; Sheen, 2006). Also, Ellis et al. (2006) cited the following example as an evidence of the high

characteristics that recasts have, varying in the degree of explicitness/ implicitness. (Han & Kim, 2008; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Sheen, 2006).

Besides, uptake rates cannot be either a good indicator of whether learning is taking place or a predictor of whether the learner who immediately repeated the recasts will subsequently make use of them (Mackey & Philp, 1998; Ohta, 2001). The reason why recasts can be very effective without the immediate response of learners to them is clearly indicated in Long's (2006) following statements: "a learner's ability to echo a teacher's model utterance on command is notoriously unreliable as an indication that the structure involved has really been learned; it is all too often no more than "language-like" behavior" (p. 99).

Most of all, Lyster's (1998a, 1998b) findings on recasts were gained in the context of communicatively-oriented immersion classrooms. If his studies had been conducted in a different context such as an EFL situation, there could have been the opposite findings. In other words, the immersion context of Lyster's findings on recasts is far from the context of EFL such as in Japan and Korea. In this sense, there comes a necessity of reviewing other researches conducted in EFL situations.

Ohta (2000), in her study of discerning recasts by adult foreign language learners of Japanese, investigated the reactions of learners who wore individual microphones for recording their personal "private speech" (i.e., oral language addressed softly by students to themselves) when one of the learners got the correction from their teacher. She found out that the learners were more inclined to respond to a recast in "private speech" when it was directed to another learner or a whole class, rather than to their own erroneous utterance. Therefore, this finding can work as evidence that the recasts can be "salient" for noticing contrasts between ill-formed and correct utterances to members of a class.

Especially in EFL settings, there is little possibility that learners confuse the functions of recasts for correction with recasts for communication, because the EFL context has already enhanced learner's sensitivity to corrective function involved in recasts, and learners were oriented to accuracy and language form.

2. Recasts vs. Prompts

With respect to prompts (i.e., CF techniques that push learners to self-correct), Ammar (2008) investigated the effectiveness of prompts and recasts. She concluded that prompts might be more effective than recasts in that prompts cause lower-level learners to develop morpho-syntactic features. However, she acknowledged that the effectiveness of prompts lied in the easy structure (i.e., possessive determiners) and that the research investigating the effects of prompts and recasts on acquiring more complex structures was needed.

Lyster (2004) compared the effects of recasts and prompts after form-focused instruction (henceforth, FFI) and indicated that the FFI-prompt group significantly outperformed the group receiving recasts or the group without feedbacks in written tasks, whereas, in oral tasks, all three treatment groups performed similarly, regardless of feedback condition. He suggested that prompts allow immersion teachers to "push" their students to be more accurate in their output. In his study, prompts include the following four types of teacher response; 1) Clarification requests (e.g., "Pardon me", "Sorry?", and "I don't understand"), 2) Repetitions (i.e., replication of student's erroneous utterance usually with rising intonation and stress), 3) metalinguistic clues (i.e., providing comments, information, or questions related to the well-formed student's utterance), and 4) Elicitation (e.g., direct questions such as "How do we say that in French?" or pauses that allow students to complete the teacher's utterance).

Lyster (2004) suggested that when using prompts, teachers refrain from giving correct forms and other signs of approval. Instead, teachers should provide learners with an opportunity to correct the errors for themselves by making their own modified response. In contrast, since recasts provide learners with correct target forms frequently with signs of approval, they tend not to push learners to modify their nontarget-like output, which results in the low rate of uptake and repair.

As a challenge to these advantages of prompts, Long (2006) argued that acquisition of new knowledge is the major goal, not 'automatizing' the retrieval of existing knowledge. Thus, prompts, withholding correct target forms, can only help if the learner already knows the correct target items. For the rest who do not already know the correct forms, prompts that require learners to try again immediately, only lead them to feel much more embarrassed than showing

their lack of knowledge publicly again.

In sum, it is obvious that using metalinguistic explanations as a CF interferes the flow of communicative interaction and treats language as an object, with focusing on the formS. As for the effects of recasts and prompts, unlike recasts, prompts don't provide the correct target forms, instead, merely demand learners to produce their own output using the already existing knowledge.

III. CHARACTERISTICS WITHIN A RECAST

The prevalent research on CF techniques indicates that recasts are regarded as categorically implicit in their characteristics. For example, Lyster and Ranta (1997) indicated that recasts are generally implicit, in that they are not introduced by phrases such as "You mean," "Use this word," and "You should say" (p47).

Long (2006) suggested that using implicit negative feedback in the form of corrective recasts, teachers, regardless of classroom contexts, can deal with many of their students' language problems incidentally. Emphasizing the corrective function of recasts, he used the term of 'corrective recast' and stated the characteristics of recasts as follows:

A corrective recast may be defined as a reformulation of all or part of a learner's immediately preceding utterance in which one or more non-target-like (lexical, grammatical, etc) items is/are replaced by the corresponding target language form(s), and where, throughout the exchange, the focus of the interlocutors is on meaning, not language as object. That is to say, unlike various traditional pedagogic procedures for delivering "error correction," the "corrections" in recasts are implicit and incidental. (p. 77)

However, while asserting the characteristics of recasts as implicit and incidental, Long (2006) suggested that "teachers can, if they so desire, use focused recasts to increase the salience of their intended corrective function" (p. 97). That is, he acknowledged 'focused recasts' as a way of enhancing the salience when teachers intend to emphasize corrective function.

Basically, Long (2006) attributed the characteristics of recasts to implicit and incidental, further, he indicated that teachers can tune the implicit features of recasts to be more focused, salient and noticeable to learners. After comparing and analyzing the recast data to date, recent research has begun to doubt whether recasts are purely implicit, as seen in the following refutation by Ellis and Sheen (2006).

The prevailing view in the recast literature is that recasts constitute an implicit form of negative feedback. Lyster (1998a) referred to their "function of implicitly [*italics added*] providing a reformulation" (p. 59), whereas Long (2006) asserted unequivocally that "a recast is a discourse move that is by definition implicit [*added italics*]" However, what exactly does implicit mean here? Does it mean that there are no overt linguistic signals that a recast is corrective in nature? Or does it mean that the learners who receive the recast remain unaware of the corrective nature of the recast? In either case, there are problems with the definition. (p. 583).

Having a different view on the definition, Ellis and Sheen (2006) suggested that recasts cannot be viewed as a purely implicit form of negative feedback. Rather, in many cases, their illocutionary force as corrections is quite transparent and, therefore, they should be seen as a relatively explicit form of negative feedback.

Again, in her study, Sheen (2006) suggested that since the terms and working definitions vary depending on studies of recasts, it can be meaningless to put together all the different types under the name of 'recasts' and also to suppose that all recasts are at categorically implicit. She argued that it is more appropriate to consider recasts as constituting an implicit/explicit continuum.

In the previous study, Sheen (2004) investigated potential variations in CF arising in four different instructional settings, three of which come from existing data taken from published research in major SLA journals, and one of which is new data from an experiment conducted by the author. The four instructional settings involving communicative language teaching are: 1) FL immersion classrooms in Canada (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; henceforth, Canada Immersion), 2)

ESL classroom in Canada (Panova & Lyster, 2002; henceforth, Canada ESL), 3) Intensive ESL classrooms in New Zealand (Ellis et al., 2001; henceforth, NZ ESL), and 4) Free-talking EFL classrooms in Korea (henceforth, Korea EFL)

Adopting Lyster and Ranta's (1997) taxonomy of CF types (i.e., explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, repetition, or combinations) and learners' immediate uptake moves, Sheen (2004) compared the distribution of teachers' CF types and learner repair in these four different settings as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency and Learner Repair of Recasts in Four Settings (Sheen, 2004)

	Canada Immersion	Canada ESL	NZ ESL	Korea EFL
Frequency of recasts	55%	55%	68%	83%
Learner repair following recasts	31%	40%	73%	83%

These results indicated that there were differences in relative frequencies of feedback types, learner uptake and repair across the settings. Further, it is suggested that the considerably different characteristics of recasts used in NZ ESL and Korea EFL led to more uptake and repair. For example, in Canada Immersion, recasts were primarily used for negotiation of meaning, often followed by topic continuation and mistaken for non-corrective repetitions. This made recasts ambiguous and non-salient, so there were relatively few opportunities for uptake and repair. On the contrary, in NZ ESL and Korea EFL, where the teachers appeared to provide more 'form-focused recasts', recasts were much more explicit and salient, resulting in higher rates of learner repair. The recasts which occurred in NZ ESL and Korea EFL had such characteristics as: 1) simplicity, 2) reduced/ partial reformulation, 3) rising intonation or emphasis, and 4) opportunity for uptake. Based on those findings, Sheen (2004) suggested that discursively different kinds of recasts arise in different communicative classroom settings. She also indicated that, depending on their form, recasts may be more or less explicit and thus more or less salient to the learner. Thus, the degree of explicitness and saliency may in turn affect both learners' uptake and subsequent repair of their

erroneous utterances. She identified the different types of recasts, in particular, in terms of their explicitness/ implicitness and presented a fine-grained taxonomy of the recasts that arose in communicative ESL (New Zealand) and EFL (Korea) classroom settings as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Characteristics of Recasts and Learner Repair (Sheen, 2006)

Taxonomy	Characteristics	Learner Repair
Mode	declarative	81%
	interrogative	47%
Duration	word-or short phrase length	83%
	clause-length	51%
Reduction	reduced	81%
	non-reduced	56%
Number of change	one change	79%
	multiple change	52%
Type of change	substitution	86%
	reordering or combination	53%
Linguistic focus	pronunciation	87%
	grammar	64%
	vocabulary	82%

Some examples of each feature cited from Sheen (2006) are as follows:

<Example 4: Declarative mode>

S: They just think hypocritic, hypocritic.

T: They are hypocritical.

<Example 5: Word-or short phrase length>

S: What's feed up?

T: fed

<Example 6: Reduction>

S: Yeah, Kal told me your height is rather shorter.

T: Rather short. Rather short.

<Example 7: One change (in the number of changes)>

S: He wants uh, he wants intelligent woman.

T: He wants an intelligent woman, does he?

<Example 8: Interrogative mode>

S: Yeah, he know Michael.

T: He knows Michael?

<Example 9: Clause length>

S: I think Haynes is uh murder

T: Haynes is the murderer.

<Example 10: Non-reduction>

T: You didn't apply, they just gave it to you?

S: I'm a freshman.

T: I was a freshman.

<Example 11: Multiple changes>

S: The leader said, taste the alcohol, and then he said change, change the glass.

T: Exchange the glasses.

Sheen (2006) indicated that recasts could be varied and regulated in the extent of implicitness/ explicitness, and that explicit recasts could improve salience for being noticed by learners, which resulted in higher rates of learner repair.

There are several other researchers who have begun to have a different view of the operational definition of recasts. In an observational study of 12 adult English L2 classrooms throughout 17 hours of meaning-based interaction, Loewen and Philp (2006) found that certain characteristics of recasts were associated with successful uptake and with accuracy on posttests. The number of feedback moves, prosodic cues, repetition, length of recast, number of changes, and segmentation

are all features that can lessen implicitness in a recast by reducing the ambiguity. The researchers suggested that recasts may range in degree of implicitness causing ambiguity and salience for noticing the reformulated corrections, and that these differences may have an impact on their effectiveness in the classroom.

In her previous study of investigating the extent of learners' noticing recasts, Philp (2003) suggested that shorter recasts may be of more benefit to learners because they can be accurately retained in working memory and thus made available for comparison and further processing. In a similar way, recasts that change the utterance in few ways linguistically may be more recalled with greater accuracy. That is, she suggested that the fewer the changes and the shorter the recast, the more likely learners are to notice it.

To sum up, recasts can be considered as an implicit/explicit continuum rather than purely implicit negative feedback, and some common characteristics to make recasts more explicit need to be consolidated.

IV. PROFICIENCY LEVEL AND RECAST

When comparing the relative effectiveness of recasts and other CF techniques, it is necessary to take learners' proficiency levels into account. While investigating the relevant data of recast literature, this study tries to get some findings about whether the effects of recasts are correlated to learners' proficiency levels.

Ellis and Sheen (2006) indicated that as with all types of form-focused instruction, the key factor is learners' developmental readiness. It means that the extent to which individual learners have reached a stage of development will enable them to incorporate the target forms addressed in recasts into their interlanguage. The notion of developmental readiness derives from early work in SLA, which showed that learners follow a relatively fixed, universal order of acquisition and manifest clear developmental sequences in the acquisition of specific structures. Thus, if the recasts set up features that a learner is developmentally primed to acquire, those recasts will be potentially effective. On the other hand, if the recasts target features that lie too far beyond the learner's

current stage of development, they are likely to fail in uptake. That is, to recognize and notice correction involved in recasts, learners should be at the developmental levels corresponding with those of the target features.

Mackey and Philp (1998) provided the convincing evidence for this argument by comparing negotiated interaction involving intensive recast groups with negotiated interaction only groups at high and low levels. The researchers assigned the groups of participants as 'ready' or 'unready' (i.e., readiness for acquiring some question structures) and compared the group differences in producing targeted higher-level question forms. The results were as follows. First, for Ready Group learners at higher stages, Intensive Recast treatment involved in negotiated interaction is more helpful for producing higher-level target forms than Negotiated Interaction Only treatment. Second, among the learners getting the same Intensive Recast treatment, higher-level, Ready Group learners showed the increase in production of more advanced question forms, but lower-level, Unready Group did not. In short, this means that only higher-level, Ready Group receiving Intensive Recast Treatment involved in negotiated interaction can show the increase in the production of targeted higher-level question forms.

However, what we have to notice here is the content of recast that Intensive Recast Group learners received. As the researchers recognized and pointed out, recasts can be not only corrective feedbacks, but also models of TL as a database for later use. Despite the differences of Readiness, the learners received the same level recasts, 4 and 5 developmental stages of question forms. Since the levels of recasts were too difficult for the Unready Group to process and respond, it seems like there was little increase for lower-level learners. If they had had more appropriate levels of recasts, they would have obtained more improvement in developmental stage increase.

Philp (2003) indicated that accurate recall was constrained by the level of the learner and by the length and the number of changes in a recast. As a bolster to support this finding, she mentioned that difficulties in recall may reflect the limitations of working memory. Unfamiliar input, multiple corrections, complex changes, and long utterances all pose high demands on the resources to which learners have to pay attention. Therefore, recasts may be less accessible to lower-level learners in particular, who have to struggle with the unfamiliarity of

the input, and get to find the disparity between the recast and their own attempts too great to deal with. Recasts may often present forms far beyond learners' IL grammar. Since working memory is limited in capacity, higher-level learners who have larger stores of L2 data and greater recognition in comprehension and production, may have relative advantages.

While Philp (2003) suggested the advantage of the higher-level learners in noticing and acquiring the target features of recasts, she also recognized and pointed out that a learner's level is not the sole determining factor in terms of what is noticed. Even learners in the lower-level group were able to retain very short recasts in working memory and recall them accurately. The researcher noted that short chunks, although beyond the levels of learners, may form the basis for future development. The suggestive point derived from this finding is that, by providing short recasts in length, a teacher can increase the possibility that lower-level learners can process recasts beyond their levels.

Myeong-Hee Seong and Hyung-Ji Chang (2009) contended that slow speech, repetition, and error correction were recognized as effective teaching techniques by low proficiency learners, while restatement was regarded as effective by high proficiency learners, after analyzing the questionnaires on the effectiveness of teaching English through English (TETE) responded by 113 college students in Korean EFL situation. This implies that since recasts have functions of repetition and error correction at the same time, recasts might be a effective teaching technique to lower-level learners in EFL situations.

Ellis and Sheen (2006) pointed out that it is important to distinguish the theoretical question of recasts in relation to developmental readiness from the practical question of how interlocutors (in particular, teachers) can ensure that the recasts they provide are developmentally appropriate. Interlocutors (especially teachers in large classes) are not in a position to determine learners' stages of development, nor will they know with any precision how high or low the learners' levels are. In short, developmental readiness should not be seen as a serious threat to the efficacy of recasts in contexts in which recasts are plentiful and extensive.

In a nutshell, as mentioned above, the higher the proficiency levels of students are, the more easily they can notice the gap between their erroneous utterances

and target-like reformulations. However, even so, it is not impossible for lower-level learners to obtain the benefits of recasts. Enhancing the salience, that is, adjusting the length of recasts by focusing the corrective function can lessen the difficulty to process the demanding resources beyond their capacity. Also, especially in large class contexts, it can be nearly impossible for a teacher to provide recasts corresponding developmental readiness of each learner. Nevertheless, in the process of negotiating with learners, a teacher can have opportunities to alleviate the problem by supplying plentiful and extensive recasts below or above learners' levels.

V. RECASTS IN LARGE CLASSES

As mentioned in the earlier section of this study, many researchers (Lowen & Philip, 2006; Ohta, 2000) suggested that recasts used in an EFL classroom situation have advantages compared to those of immersion classrooms, in that EFL situation can easily cultivate metalinguistic sensitivity for noticing the corrective function of recasts without being confused with ostensible ambiguity.

Han (2002) indicated that four factors – individualized attention, consistent focus, developmental readiness, and intensity (i.e., frequency of use) can create a condition in which recasts prove to be successful. The researcher suggested that only when the four factors constitute a series of interconnected and interdependent conditions, they can make recasts have the effects of salience, relevance and reinforcement. In this respect, the researcher doubted that in real classrooms, these conditions would seem easily replicable, not in a laboratory setting with a small number of participants. As the researcher pointed out, "in real classrooms, students rarely get much, if any, individual attention, and corrective feedback, if provided, is usually given ad hoc, covering a wide range of interlanguage constructions" (p. 569).

However, unlike Lyster's (1998a, 1998b) immersion classrooms, in EFL classrooms, it is not so difficult for students to receive focused recasts in the consistent and persistent way. What matters is how we can get effective functioning of recasts in real classrooms, where students cannot get much

individualized attention and correction as Han (2002) pointed out.

In Ohta's (2001) study, the participants wearing individual microphones, displayed in their private speech, recasts and 'incidental recasts', during teacher-fronted instructions and peer group works. By using the term of 'incidental recasts', the researcher tried to prove that learners tend to capitalize on corrective feedback addressed to other classmates, learning from their classmates' errors and how they are treated by a teacher. Also, in their private speech, learners show a vicarious response, even though the recasts are not targeted toward themselves. She suggested the potential of incidental recasts in the choral response context of teacher-fronted setting as follows:

The choral response context provides an opportunity for learners to produce their own answers to questions or prompts the teacher addresses to the entire class. By asking the class as a whole, the teacher legitimizes the learner's use of private turns. In this context, even though the teacher is only able to broadly monitor learner responses, not to follow up each individual's utterance, learners are privy to corrective feedback in the form of incidental recasts when their malformed utterances contrast with the correct utterances of fellow classmates or the teacher. Corrective feedback, therefore, even if not intentionally provided, is available to the students. (p. 160)

Even though learners can have high levels of attentiveness in interacting with a teacher directly or participating in the teacher's interaction with another classmate as a potential addressee, the frequency of each individual student's face to face interaction with a teacher is not quite high in large classes. In that sense, peer learning settings are helpful for learners to have more opportunities to freely experiment their language, apply what they learned from recasts and self-correct their utterances. In peer learning settings, learners can make use of incidental recasts when overhearing the language produced in the interactions of other groups or pairs working in parallel.

Incidental recasts help to prove the effectiveness of recasts used in large classes, however, it has to be considered as essential that teachers should have the abilities of deploying corrective recasts while maintaining interactive

communication instead of continuing didactic feedbacks. In an analysis of video-transcription observed in a Korean EFL class, Suyeon Kim (2005) pointed out that in form-and-accuracy contexts such as drills of a grammatical item, a teacher wants learners to correct errors in exactly the same form as they intend to, although there is no linguistic or sequential trouble in the learners' utterances. Also the researcher claimed that in meaning-and-fluency contexts such as role-play activities between learners, the teacher didn't attempt to correct phonological and grammatical errors at all. Even though it was merely one period class conducted by a single specific teacher, this implies that teachers in EFL situations may be reluctant in utilizing error corrections like recasts in meaning-based communication contexts in the excuse of not interrupting the communicative flow. Thus, practical and definite guidelines and techniques about how to use recasts in class need to be provided for teachers in EFL situations.

Han and Kim (2008) introduced five strategies that teachers can possibly utilize recasts as a means to enhance learners' language learning. The researchers indicated that the corrective potential of recasts can be fulfilled only strategically, in this sense, presented five strategies that can be used to increase the salience of the recasts so that they become more noticeable and more effective. The five strategies are as follows: (1) cultivating metalinguistic sensitivity, (2) keeping a narrow focus, (3) negotiating recasts, (4) promoting self-negotiation, and (5) seeking out teachable moments.

From these results, this study asserts that recasts as corrective feedbacks will have the advantages over other CF techniques in large classes of EFL situations, because learners take advantage of incidental recasts which are not intended to themselves. Also, teachers' awareness on practical strategies in utilizing recasts is needed to enhance the effectiveness of recasts.

VI. CONCLUSION

Even though there can be other research findings to repudiate the superiority of recasts, it is not so difficult to enumerate disadvantages of the other CF techniques in following aspects: (a) metalinguistic explanations, as explicit

instruction, can have the risk of interrupting the communicative flow and lose the balance of focusing on meaning as well as on form; (b) prompts, pushing learners to self-correct, can make learners who do not have preexisting knowledge feel embarrassed. Also language learning is not merely recognition of already-internalized knowledge retrieval without supplying novel linguistic knowledge.

When it comes to recasts' definition, instead of considering recasts as purely implicit negative feedback, it is more appropriate for recasts themselves to be regarded as an implicit/explicit continuum. Some common findings about how to make recasts more explicit and salient are providing recasts (a) in declarative mode, (b) in short, reduced length, (c) with a single error focus, (d) involving substitution in the type of change, and (e) with stress and repetition.

In ESL and EFL situations, learners can have more metalinguistic sensitivity to recognize recasts as correction to their erroneous utterances; therefore, recasts can be an effective method to focus on form as well as on meaning in negotiated interactions. On the other hand, in content-based immersion classroom situations, explicit instruction skills are needed to increase metalinguistic sensitivity.

In general, it is likely that when the levels of targeted forms and learner's proficiency are corresponding, the learners can easily notice the gap of reformulated recasts. In this theoretical respect, it can be suggested that only higher-level of learners can process the higher-level knowledge beyond their working memory capacity. However, teachers can find methodical solutions to increase the possibilities for even lower level learners to notice the correction given in recasts.

In large classes where it is impossible for a teacher to adjust the difficulty levels of recasts to be appropriate to each learner's proficiency level, teachers can improve the situation by providing abundant and extensive recasts without being meticulous about matching the levels of learners and those of recasts.

Even though it is acknowledged that recasts are superior to other CF techniques as mentioned above, it does not mean that teachers should eschew other CF techniques absolutely, because there are many research results proving

the advantages of each CF technique. Thus, it is necessary for a teacher to be well informed of comprehensive features of recasts and to select and apply the most appropriate strategies of recasts to interactive communication in every moment.

Last but not least, unless recasts are applied to and utilized in learning contexts (e.g., real classrooms) by teachers, the precious findings by a number of researchers can be just the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

This study is just a small-scale review of recast literature, not including comprehensive and extensive investigation. The purpose of this study is to find insightful suggestions for applying recasts to real classrooms in EFL situations. Fortunately, this study encountered some research results to approve the superiority of recasts used in EFL situations, but as Long (2006) suggested, to have a fundamental change realized in the actual classrooms, we need more methodological and more concrete materials and instructions to make it easier for teachers to internalize and deploy recasts.

Next, this study found some characteristics and features to make recasts more or less implicit/explicit. However, it is necessary to investigate the difference in extent when using explicit features only and implicit features only, and then comparing the results. Through such kind of future research, it can be possible to support and articulate the advantages of explicit features for noticing reformulated recasts.

Finally, as Mackey, Polio, and McDonough (2004) suggested that inexperienced ESL teachers' awareness and use of incidental focus-on-form techniques (i.e., recasts as CF), could be enhanced through a teacher education workshop, future research is needed to find out whether or not a teacher education workshop to inexperienced teachers of EFL situations can improve their awareness and use of recasts.

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