Impact of Teachers' Corrective Feedback Types on TOEFL Junior Candidates' Receptive Skills and Examining Their Perceptions Toward the Efficiency of These Skills

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine how the three types of CF—explicit, metalinguistic, and recast—affect receptive skills and to find out how TOEFL Junior applicants felt about the effectiveness of these CFs in these two domains. In this study, an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was used. Using a convenience selection technique, 130 boys and girls who were TOEFL Junior candidates at a TOEFL Junior center served as the study's initial participants. The Pearson Longman Placement Test was used to make sure that each participant's level of language proficiency was the same. Consequently, based on the outcomes of the placement test, 100 candidates were chosen to be participants. Subsequently, they were split up into four groups at random: the control group, group 2 (metalinguistic), group 3 (recast), and the first experimental group (explicit). The study's pre-test was then given, which consisted of the listening and reading comprehension portions of the TOEFL Junior Test. Ten sessions of treatment were then conducted. The post-test included of the listening and reading comprehension portions of the TOEFL Junior Test, which were given after these sessions. Twelve students from the three experimental groups were then given a semi-structured interview. The results of this investigation demonstrated that, in terms of applicants' hearing and reading ability, explicit CF is superior to recast; however, there was no discernible difference between explicit and metalinguistic CF. The qualitative results also showed that the participants had a favorable attitude regarding using various CFs to improve their receptive skills.

Keywords: Corrective Feedback, Explicit Feedback, Listening, Metalinguistic Feedback, Reading, Recast, TOEFL Junior.

INTRODUCTION

Standardized examinations are considered a useful tool for guaranteeing equity similarity and are easy, quick, and efficient from an institutional perspective (Daller & Phelan, 2013; Kokhan, 2012, 2013). The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is "a standardized test designed to measure the ability to understand and to use English as it is used in a North American academic setting such as a university," according to Educational Testing Service (ETS) (2019, p. 3). More than 30 million test-takers in more than 180 countries have taken the TOEFL since it was first offered in 1964 in all of its iterations. Numerous organizations, institutions, and universities in about 80 countries, including Australia, Canada, the United

Kingdom, the United States, and others, accept results from the TOEFL (ETS, 2019). The reasonable chance of a student thriving in an academic English setting, especially at a college or university in the United States, is determined by use of such standardized examinations (ETS, 2005). There are other TOEFL examination formats; however, this study focuses on the TOEFL test, which is intended for junior students in the 15–19 age group. Using activities that are typical of the classroom, it looks at how language is used in social and academic contexts in English-medium learning environments (Gu, 2015).

While early reading skills have received a lot of attention, scholarly studies have long treated reading as a common subject (Hagaman & Reid, 2008). As students advance in their higher education, reading comprehension becomes more and more crucial to their academic achievement. It provides a framework for gaining subject-specific knowledge (Valencia et al., 2011; Hamilton, 2009). According to Hamilton (2009), pupils who are proficient readers also do well in other academic subjects. Ness (2009) discovered that a large portion of middle and high school students' comprehension problems cause them to struggle with the demanding literacy tasks in core courses. Comprehending problems makes it difficult, if not impossible, for readers to gain from instruction in most content categories as text is the primary source of information (Hagaman & Reid, 2008). This study also looked at listening comprehension, which is a crucial skill for learning a second language (L2) and is the first experience a learner has with a foreign language (FL) (Vandergrift & Baker, 2015; Liu, 2009). (Berne, 2004; Vandergrift, 2007). The ability to listen well changed into an active skill in the 1970s, and in educational settings, this skill has received special attention. Up until the 1980s and 1990s, when this talent started to be used in L2 schooling settings, more academics were interested in studying different facets of this skill (Osada, 2004 as referenced in Naderi, 2014).

Furthermore, this ability significantly aids EFL students in acquiring L2 for communication purposes. EFL/ESL students who improve their listening comprehension skills may be able to communicate more effectively because these skills help learners recognize the different aspects of oral language users' accents and pronunciations (Andujar & Hussein, 2019). Thus, as two receptive English language skills, reading and listening comprehension were examined in the current study.

It was found that errors are caused by more than only mother tongue intrusion; some other universal and underlying structures, including learner cognition, are also responsible for errors made by learners (Dekeyser, 2007). When mistakes are made by students during their learning process, teachers need to step in, rectify the mistakes, and keep them from being entrenched in the students' interlanguage (IL) (Gass & Mackey, 2007). Corrective feedback (CF) is defined by Lightbown and Spada (1999) as any indication that students are not utilizing the L2 correctly. Teachers can help L2 students by pointing out their mistakes and providing the appropriate format so that students can identify their mistakes and avoid making the same ones in the future (Beuningen, Jong, & Kuiken, 2012). According to Nassaji and Swain (2000), CF is necessary for L2 students to avoid making incorrect assumptions about certain elements, and it may help prevent some types of over-generalization that could affect the learners' IL. Proponents of the noticing hypothesis (e.g., Sato & Lyster, 2012; Schmidt, 1990, 2001) have considered CF as a means of directing students' attention to form and as an impulse for noticing (Chehr Azad et al., 2018). It also enables people to compare their input and their IL intellectually (Ellis, 1994). It could be useful for them to undertake targeted input analysis (Ellis, 2005).

Even if a lot of academics have been interested in studying the function of CF in L2 education lately, there are a lot of issues and difficulties with its use (Ellis, 2006). L2 teachers can provide students with several forms of CF, including explicit correction, recast, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Some types of CF have also been proposed to

promote L2 acquisition (Li, 2010; Santos, Serrano, & Manchón, 2010). Stated differently, CF type has an impact on notification quality and, consequently, L2 item internalization. While CF that does not include a complete reformulation and instead asks students to attempt self-repair or modify the output may necessitate more thorough processing and, as a result, enhance control of previously internalized L2 forms, recasting that incorporates positive L2 evidence, for example, may be helpful in internalizing new forms (Lyster, 1998). While other methods of encouraging output, such as metalinguistic feedback, were considered clearer, recasts are often considered implicit by essence (Long, 1996, 2007). (Ellis 2021; Nicholas et al., 2001). About Schmidt's (1990) "noticing hypothesis" and Long's (1996) "interaction hypothesis," Russel and Spada (2006, cited in Abanoglu & Agcam, 2015) contend that the CF explicitness degree may be significant because it advances the notion of "noticing" L2 elements during communication. Students might be more aware of explicit CF kinds than implicit ones, per Lyster et al. (2013). Some research (Ellis et al., 2006; Mackey & Goo, 2007; Li, 2010) suggests that implicit CF effects may be more durable than explicit ones, which may be beneficial in the short term. Thus, recast was examined as an implicit CF type in this study, while explicit correction and metalinguistic feedback were examined as explicit CF kinds.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate how the three forms of CF (explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback, and recast) affected the candidates' perceptions of their efficacy in the reading and listening comprehension sections of the TOEFL Junior.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Recast as an Implicit CF

Recast is one of the most studied subtypes of CF. Long (2007) defines a recast as "a reformulation of all or part of a learner's immediately preceding utterance in which the corresponding target language form(s) is(are) replaced by one or more non-target-like (lexical, grammatical, etc.) items, and where the interlocutors' focus is on meaning, not language as object, throughout the exchange" (p. 77). Because recasts are implicit, a more experienced interlocutor can handle non-target-like L2 output from language learners without interfering with meaning-oriented discussion. Recasts have several advantages, especially in educational settings. Recasts can be time-saving, less damaging to students' confidence, and less disruptive of the flow of communication because they are implicit (Loewen & Philp, 2006).

Doughty (2001, cited in Karimi & Esfandiari, 2016) believed that recasts were the most effective approach to achieve an instant contingent attention on form. Contrary to explicit CF, which obstructs learning by intruding into the learner's encoding of a speech, implicit correction—such as recasts—results in the insertion of the new L2 form into the interaction flow. Thus, recasts could keep the focus on meaning while pointing out to students the difference between their false second language statement and the actual L2 form. On the other hand, overt CF could prevent people from communicating (Karimi & Esfandiari, 2016).

Metalinguistic Feedback as an Explicit Form of Feedback

Metalinguistic feedback is "comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the learner's utterance," according to Lyster & Ranta (1997) (p. 47). Among the components of what are called "prompts" is metalinguistic feedback. Metalinguistic feedback or clues are remarks, details, or inquiries from the teacher concerning how well-formed the student's prior utterance was. Instructors frequently use phrases like "Can you find your error?" "No, not X." or just "No" to offer metalinguistic feedback or hints

(Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 47).

Similar to explicit error correction, metalinguistic feedback places the focus of the conversation on the grammar and linguistic features of the target language, placing it at the explicit end of the corrective CF continuum (Gholizade, 2013). It is believed that the unique feature of metalinguistic instruction is not its deterministic nature, despite what it may seem like. Rather, it is the encoding of evaluations or commentary about the non-target-like quality of the learner's utterance. The three subcategories of metalinguistic feedback are metalinguistic inquiries, metalinguistic remarks, and metalinguistic information (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

Explicit Correction

Providing the right form directly is necessary for explicit correction in response to learner error. Explicit correction is the explicit provision of the L2 correct form. The teacher emphasizes his point and makes it clear that the pupil made a mistake by using the correct form (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). According to Abanoglu and Agcam (2015), explicit correction merely serves to draw learners' attention to mistakes in their language. While implicit CF may be more effective in helping students self-correct, explicit CF may be more beneficial in terms of student uptake (Xu, 2012). According to Ryan (2012), the main advantage of this kind of CF is that the learner immediately recognizes that the L2 item they generated was poorly formed. However, one drawback might be that the student might take longer to remember the corrected form that was presented. That is to say, the student is not given the chance to try and figure out why the provided L2 item was incorrect because the instructor supplies the proper form.

Empirical Studies

Lyster and Izquierdo (2009) examined the relative effects of recasts and prompts on the development of French grammatical gender. Over the course of two weeks, a form-focused instructional (FFI) course of three hours was attended by twenty-five college students. The results showed a significant main impact for Time (pre-test-post-test-delayed post-tests) in both dependent variable measures and the reaction-time measure, a nonsignificant primary effect for Group (recast vs. prompts), and an interaction effect for time and group that was not statistically significant. Similar to this, Ellis (2007) examined the differences in the effects of two types of corrective feedback, namely metalingusitic and recast, on the acquisition of two separate structures: the comparative -er and the past tense morpheme -ed. The oral imitation test, the untimed GJT, and the metalinguistic knowledge exam were the three distinct dependent variable measures that were employed. The findings showed that while metalinguistic feedback varied in its effects on the acquisition of the two target structures, recasts had no discernible differences in their effects. Similarly, Ellis et al. (2006) examined the effectiveness of recasts and metalinguistic feedback as forms of corrective feedback for teaching students the English past tense morpheme -ed. Learner performance was evaluated using an oral imitation exam, an untimed GJT, and a metalinguistic knowledge test. The results of the oral imitation and the untimed GJT showed that the metalinguistic group performed significantly better than the recast group (and the control group) in the delayed post-test, despite the fact that there was no significant between-group difference in performance between the metalinguistic group and the recast group (or the control group) in the immediate post-test for either test measure. Similarly, Ammar and Spada (2006) compared the impact of several prompts on the acquisition of English third-person singular possessive determiners (his and her), including elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, repetition, and recasts. They also examined the relationship between proficiency and the efficacy of recasts and prompts. In a four-week

period, all sixty-four students participated in one instruction session (recasts, prompts, and control, same for all three groups) and eleven practice sessions, wherein, based on their group membership, each student received the appropriate instructional approach (recasts, prompts, or no feedback). The results showed that the prompt group did better than the recast group (all differences between the two experimental groups were significant, except for the oral picture description task immediate post-test). They also observed that low-proficiency learners (those with less than 50% accuracy in the pre-tests) benefited more from prompts than from recasts, whereas high-proficiency learners (those with more than 50% accuracy in the pre-tests) benefited similarly from both types of feedback. In a similar vein, Nassaji (2009) examined how two forms of interactional CF, recasts and elicitation, affect the structural elements that arise in unintentional group encounters. The study looked at CFs' short- and long-term impacts. The findings showed that recasts were superior to elicitation in terms of immediate advantages. Furthermore, the outcomes showed that for both kinds of corrective feedback, the more explicit CF was more advantageous than the implicit CF. Therefore, it was thought that the explicitness level was essential to CFs' efficacy.

Pany et al. (1981) looked at the effect of CF on oral reading comprehension performance. 34 students were split into two reading ability groups, Primary and Intermediate. Two groups of randomly selected students—one with CF conditions and the other without—were formed. The findings demonstrated that there were very minor, statistically significant differences in students' comprehension performance at each ability level under either condition. Excellent overall understanding results were obtained in both situations. The results disproved the hypothesis that reading comprehension is negatively impacted by cystic fibrosis. Furthermore, Naderi (2014a) examined the impact of recast and explicit forms of CF on intermediate EFL learners' attitudes about their listening self-efficacy. The results showed that both CFs were useful in raising students' listening self-efficacy, although the explicit CF was shown to be better than the other. Furthermore, Naderi (2014b) examined the effects of recast and explicit CF on the listening comprehension skills of intermediate EFL students. The findings demonstrated that both of the completed CFs were successful in terms of listening comprehension; additionally, specific feedback proved to be more beneficial than recasting one of the two completed CFs during the term.

The study is noteworthy since it is the first of its kind to look at how the receptive skills of TOEFL Junior candidates have developed using error treatment procedures (CF). Additionally, as far as the researchers of this study are aware, the majority of CF studies looked at productive L2 skills (Lyster & Izquierdo, 2009; Ellis, 2006, 2007; Ammar & Spada, 2006), and only a small number looked at the efficacy of CFs in receptive skills (Naderi, 2014a, 2014b). Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to close this gap in the literature by examining the effects of three different types of feedback on the reading and listening skills of EFL young learners in junior TOEFL exams: explicit feedback, recast feedback, and metalinguistic feedback.

In view of the aforementioned issue and the purpose of the study, the following research questions were therefore put forth:

RQ1. Is there any statistically significant difference in learners' listening scores while using explicit feedback, metalinguistic feedback, and recast in listening comprehension instruction?
RQ2. Is there any statistically significant difference in learners' reading scores while using explicit feedback, metalinguistic feedback, and recast in reading comprehension instruction?
RQ3. What are candidates' perceptions regarding CFs application?

METHOD

Participants

At a TOEFL Junior and primary center in Tehran, 130 TOEFL Junior candidates were the initial participants. Participants in the study included both male and female students, ages 15 to 19, whose first language was Persian. The convenience (availability) sample technique was used to choose study participants (Dornyei, 2007). Candidates who mentioned preparing for the TOEFL junior exam for the fall semester of 2020 were therefore taken into consideration for this study. The Pearson Longman Placement Test (2006) was used to make sure that the participants' language proficiency was uniform. As a result, 100 people were chosen as study participants out of a total of 100, with scores ranging from 30 to 47. The candidates were classified as intermediate-level according to the Pearson Longman Placement Test score system. After that, students were split into four groups at random: the control group, three experimental groups (explicit CF, metalinguistic CF, and recast CF), and one experimental group (explicit CF). There were twenty-five contestants per group. Twelve participants were also chosen from the experimental groups to participate in interviews about the effectiveness of various forms of CF.

Instruments

The Pearson Longman Placement Test

The Pearson Longman Placement test first pencil-and-paper version, created by Joan Saslow and Allen Ascher (2006), was used in this study. It is feasible to grade students according to discrete skill levels and easy to administer. There are three sections: Grammar knowledge is tested in Part 1, vocabulary knowledge is tested in Part 2, and listening comprehension is tested in Part 3. Three TEFL Ph.D. holders attested to the test's content validity, and Wistner, Sakai, and Abe (2009) determined that it was reliable and within an acceptable range (r=.80). Additionally, construct validity is enjoyed by this placement test (Wistner et al., 2009). The scores were interpreted as shown in Table 1 after being administered and scored in accordance with the key (see Table 1).

Table 1

Oxford Placement Test Interpretation According to CEFR (Council of Europe, 2009)

Points	Course level	Equivalent level
0-17	Level A1	Breakthrough or Beginner
18-29	Level A2	Waystage or Elementary
30-39	Level B1	Threshold or Intermediate
40-47	Level B2	Vantage or Upper intermediate
48-54	Level C1	Effective Operational Proficiency or Advanced
54-60	Level C2	Mastery or Proficiency

In order to include intermediate-level students, the researcher only included individuals whose scores fell between 30 and 47.

TOEFL Junior Test
Listening and Reading Comprehension Sections

Pre-test and post-test results for the study were obtained using a TOEFL Junior (2006) to gauge the receptive proficiency level of EFL learners before and after treatment sessions. There are 40 questions in this part, and a total of 100 points were awarded. The ability to listen for academic, social, and educational purposes is measured in the listening comprehension part. There are three different kinds of inquiries in this section: classroom instruction, brief talks, and academic listening. A candidate's ability to read and comprehend academic and non-academic texts that they may come across in a classroom setting is assessed by the reading comprehension test. These texts include news articles, non-linear texts like schedules and menus, and written communication like emails, notes, and letters.

Semi-structured Interview

Twelve students from three experimental groups—four students from each group—were given semi-structured interviews to find out how they felt about using explicit feedback, metalinguistic feedback, and recast feedback to improve their reading and listening comprehension skills. The researchers of the current study created the five interview questions after evaluating the relevant literature. To ensure that the interview questions had valid material, three subject-matter experts reviewed and approved them. The interviews took place in person and were conducted in English. Every session took place over the course of two weeks and lasted around 20 minutes. With the participants' permission, the interviews were taped and then transcribed.

Procedure

An explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was used to take into account the main points of the research questions; as a result, the present study was first conducted using a quantitative method before switching to a qualitative one (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Quantitative Phase
The Placement Test and Pre-test Administration

The study's first participants were thirty-one TOEFL Junior candidates at a TOEFL Junior primary center in Tehran. To ensure consistency in language skills throughout participants, the Pearson Longman Placement Test (2006) was employed. Consequently, one hundred volunteers with scores ranging from thirty to forty-seven out of a possible hundred were selected for the study. The candidates' scores from the Pearson Longman Placement Test were used to classify them as intermediate-level. Following that, students were divided into four groups at random: one experimental group (explicit CF), three experimental groups (explicit CF, metalinguistic CF, and recast CF), and the control group. Each group consisted of twenty-five candidates. The listening and reading comprehension sections of the TOEFL Junior Test (2006) were used as the study's pre-test.

Treatment Sessions

Ten sessions of treatment were conducted, lasting ninety minutes each. Three classes were designated as experimental groups and given the CF treatment: the control group, experimental group 1 (explicit CF), experimental group 2 (metalinguistic CF), and experimental group 3 (recast CF). The control group was instructed using the institute's syllabus.

In the case of experimental group 1 (explicit CF), the teacher promptly provided the proper form after indicating that the student's previous utterance contained an error (Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006). The right forms were stated by the teacher clearly in the listening portion, and the response papers with the correct forms annotated in the reading component.

The teacher specifically addresses the student for the type of error produced by mentioning the incorrect answers in relation to experimental group 2 (metalinguistic CF). It entails providing the appropriate form or eliciting it (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). The teacher clarified that students gave well-formed responses to questions and corrected mistakes in their reading and listening assignments. Furthermore, before offering the right response, students were asked to guess the right response based on hints that the professors had provided. Using this approach, the instructor led the class until they discovered the right response. In the meantime, the instructor tried to pose questions that were relevant to the solution while correcting the mistakes by giving students access to their multilingual comments and information.

Recasting was used in experimental group 3 (recast CF) to address language learners' non-target-like L2 production without interfering with their ability to communicate in a meaning-oriented situation (Long, 2007). During listening exercises, pupils' mistakes were rectified by the teacher by having them repeat the portion of speech they had mispronounced. When students gave incorrect answers in reading comprehension, the teacher would repeat the question and go on to the right response without calling out individual students or assigning grades.

The control group was given the institute's traditional training, in which the instructor used error correction techniques based on his judgment and experience while taking the candidates' and the class's circumstances into account.

Post-test Administration

After the treatment sessions, the reading and listening comprehension parts of the TOEFL Junior Test (2006) were administered as the study's post-test to gauge how well the interventions had affected the participants' reading and listening comprehension skills.

Qualitative Phase

Twelve students, four from each of the three experimental groups, participated in the semi-structured interview. Before the interview sessions, the participants were informed of the interview's goal and schedule. Conducting the interviews was the responsibility of the first author of the study. With the participants' consent, all interviews were taped and transcriptions were made during their approximately 20-minute duration to ensure that no material was lost. The venue was the professors' room of the institute.

Data Analysis Procedure

Descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to analyze the data. The quantitative data were evaluated using an independent sample t-test and an analysis of variance (ANOVA), with SPSS (24th edition) being utilized. To assess the data's normality, the skewness and kurtosis indices were used, along with their ratios

over standard errors. The descriptive qualitative content analysis method was used to examine the qualitative data (Creswell, 2012).

RESULTS

Addressing the First Research Question

Is there any statistically significant difference in learners' listening scores while using explicit feedback, metalinguistic feedback, and recast in listening comprehension instruction?

Table 2 displays the findings of a descriptive analysis of the post-test scores for the three experimental groups and the control group. The mean was 64.05 for experimental group 1 (explicit CF), 60.80 for experimental group 2 (metalinguistic CF), and 59.30 for experimental group 3 (recast CF). Consequently, there is a difference in the means of the three groups, albeit it is still unclear if this difference is noteworthy. Thus, the ANOVA that is shown in Table 3 was used.

Table 2

Descriptive result of scores in the post test for three groups of explicit feedback (EF), metalinguistic feedback (MF) and recast (R)

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum	Between-Component Variance
EF		25	64.05	4.023	1.272	61.17	66.92	59.50	71.00	
MF		25	60.80	3.198	1.011	58.51	63.08	55.00	64.50	
R		25	59.30	4.191	1.325	56.30	62.29	54.00	67.00	
Total		25	61.38	4.209	.768	59.81	62.95	54.00	71.00	
Model	Fixed Effects			3.829	.699	59.94	62.81			
	Random Effects				1.408	55.3515	67.4152			4.42944

ANOVA specified whether there is a significant difference between the three groups in general or not. The results of the analysis between groups showed that the p. value (sig. 0.030) is less than 0.05 that indicates a significant difference between groups (Table 3). However, it did not specify the differences between groups. For this reason, the three groups were compared using Post Hoc multiple comparison as presented in Table 4.

Table 3

ANOVA analysis of significance differences between three groups of explicit feedback (EF), metalinguistic feedback (MF) and recast (R)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	117.917	2	58.958	4.021	.030
Within Groups	395.925	27	14.664		
Total	513.842	29			

The result of the multiple comparison using Post Hoc test is presented in Table 4. This test provided a comparative analysis of the three groups as follows:

- The p. value of difference between the experimental group 1 and the experimental group 2 was 0.068 that is higher than 0.05; therefore, there is no significant difference between EF and MF groups.
- The p. value of difference between the experimental group 1 and the experimental group 3 was 0.010 that is less than 0.05; therefore, there is a significant difference between the experimental group 1 and the experimental group 3.
- The p. value of difference between the experimental group 2 and the experimental group 3 was 0.389 that is higher than 0.05; therefore, there is no significant difference between the experimental group 2 and the experimental group 3.

Table 4

Multiple comparison of significant difference between the three groups of explicit feedback (EF), metalinguistic feedback (MF) and recast (R)

(I) groups	(J) groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
EF	MF	3.250	1.712	.068	-.26	6.7638
	R	4.750*	1.712	.010	1.23	8.2638
MF	EF	-3.250	1.712	.068	-6.76	.2638
	R	1.500	1.712	.389	-2.01	5.0138
R	EF	-4.750*	1.712	.010	-8.26	-1.2362
	MF	-1.500	1.712	.389	-5.01	2.0138

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

According to the results of the above table regarding multiple comparisons of the three groups, it was specified that explicit CF is more effective than recast, while no significant difference was observed between explicit CF and metalinguistic CF.

Addressing the Second Research Question

Is there any statistically significant difference in learners' reading scores while using explicit feedback, metalinguistic feedback, and recast in reading comprehension instruction?

Table 5 displays the findings of a descriptive analysis of the experimental group's and the three subgroups' post-test scores. The means for the first experimental group (explicit CF) were 67.30, the second group (metalinguistic Cf) was 64.80, and the third group (recast CF) had 63.80 mean levels. As a result, the means of the three groups differ, however it's yet unclear if this difference is noteworthy or not. Consequently, the ANOVA that is shown in Table 4.1 was used.

Table 5

Descriptive result of scores in the post test for three groups of explicit feedback (EF), metalinguistic feedback (MF) and recast (R)

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum	Variance Component	Between-Component
EF		25	67.30	4.013	1.272	61.17	77.92	59.50	78.00		
MF		25	64.80	4.098	1.011	58.51	73.08	55.00	73.50		
R		25	63.80	4.091	1.325	56.30	74.29	54.00	75.00		
Total		25	65.30	4.109	.768	59.81	75.95	54.00	78.00		
Model	Fixed Effects			3.8929	.699	59.94	62.81				
	Random Effects				1.408	55.3515	67.4152				4.42944

The results of the ANOVA test indicated whether or not there is a general, significant difference between the three groups. The analysis of the data between the groups revealed that there is a significant difference between the groups when the p-value (sig. 0.035) is less than 0.05 (Table 6). It did not, however, detail the distinctions between the categories. Because of this, Post Hoc multiple comparison was used to compare the three groups (Table 7).

Table 6

ANOVA analysis of significance differences between three groups of explicit feedback (EF), metalinguistic feedback (MF) and recast (R)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	116.917	2	65.30	4.041	.035
Within Groups	385.925	27	14.764		
Total	523.842	29			

The result of the multiple comparison using Post Hoc test is presented below in Table 7. This test provided a comparative analysis of the three groups as follows:

- The p. value of difference between the experimental group 1 and the experimental group 2 was 0.078 that is higher than 0.05; therefore, there is no significant difference between the experimental group 1 and the experimental group 2.

- The p. value of difference between the experimental group 1 and the experimental group 3 was 0.030 that is less than 0.05; therefore, there is a significant difference between the experimental group 1 and the experimental group 3.
- The p. value of difference between the experimental group 2 and the experimental group 3 was 0.289 that is higher than 0.05; therefore, there is no significant difference between the experimental group 2 and the experimental group 3.

Table 7

Multiple comparison of significant difference between the three groups of explicit feedback (EF), metalinguistic feedback (MF) and recast (R)

(I) groups	(J) groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound
EF	MF	3.150	1.722	.078	-.26	6.7638
	R	4.700*	1.722	.030	1.23	8.2638
MF	EF	-3.150	1.722	.078	-6.76	.2638
	R	1.510	1.722	.289	-2.01	5.0138
R	EF	-4.700*	1.722	.030	-8.26	-1.2362
	MF	-1.510	1.722	.289	-5.01	2.0138
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.						

According to the results of the above table regarding multiple comparisons of the three groups, it was specified that explicit CF is more effective than recast CF, while no significant difference was observed between explicit CF and metalinguistic CF.

Addressing the Third Research Question

What are candidates' perceptions regarding CFs application?

An interview that was only loosely structured was used to answer this query. A descriptive qualitative content analysis technique was used to assess the data (Creswell, 2012). Before the interview transcripts were classified to examine the categories and subcategories, they were carefully read. After that, the categories and subcategories were read multiple times, and the following were determined to be the main themes:

Developing the noticing ability of the learners

Most of the learners believed that using CFs by their teachers could improve their noticing ability regarding their errors in listening and reading skills. They maintained that CFs could draw their attention to their errors both directly and indirectly, which could fill the gaps in their interlanguage. Reza, one of the high achievers in the post-test, noted,

> The most important benefit of the CFs is improving our noticing towards the common errors that we have in our L2 language system. Some of them remained untouched since we did not receive any proper CFs towards these errors. But in this course, the teacher provided the explicit type of CF, which could be very beneficial for our language proficiency in this course.

He held that noticing is very important to recognize the errors in the interlanguage since they may be persistent for a long time without receiving the direct instructions towards existing these errors in their L2 language system. He believed that the explicit forms of CF, which they received during this course, could enhance their noticing ability with regard to their errors. In this respect, Mina pointed out,

> CFs could improve our noticing skill regarding our errors in using L2 language. Some of the errors can be corrected only by improving our noticing ability towards them, such as using and recognizing the functions of infinitive and gerund in the spoken and written texts.

She argued that applying CFs in this course was so useful for her L2 language use as she could improve her noticing ability towards her persistent errors in her L2 system. She could implement the obtained noticing in recognizing different language functions in the spoken and written English texts.

Improving the learners' language receptive skills

Most of the participants believed that applying CFs by the teachers could enhance their listening and reading skills. They noted that CFs could raise their awareness towards their important language items within the written and spoken texts. Ali in this respect mentioned, "I could improve my reading skills in this course due to the teachers 'CFs. Upon receiving the feedback, I could find the most significant vocabularies and expressions within the reading texts to comprehend the texts better". He argued that applying CFs was very beneficial for his reading skills since he could find the important language items that are necessary for the text comprehension. Maryam in this regard pointed out,

> Applying the corrective feedbacks in our class can help me improve my listening skills. I can recognize the important information in the listening parts by the help of the teachers' CFs. Sometimes, he tried to provide the implicit CF to raise our awareness towards our pitfalls in our listening skill, which was very effective for me as a curious student.

She maintained that using CFs by the instructor was beneficial for her listening comprehension skill since she got the ability to recognize the important information in the spoken texts. She believed that implicit type of CF (recast) was beneficial for her due to her curiosity.

Enhancing the learners' metacognition skills

Some of the participants held that receiving CFs developed their metacognition skills to monitor their language use and performance. They mentioned that recognizing their errors and mistakes in listening and reading skills through the instructors' CFs can develop their knowledge concerning their own language processes and products in which they could monitor their performance by themselves. Zahra in this respect said, "Presenting the CFs by our teacher in this course was useful since I could develop my knowledge regarding my performance. In other words, I could monitor my performance in listening and reading skills". She believed that implementing CFs in this course was helpful as she could improve her metacognition skills. Javad in this regard noted,

> One of the main features of this course was providing the practical and useful CFs by our instructor. I think that these CFs could enhance my monitoring ability to observe my performance and regulate my ability to perform the tasks better. When I received feedbacks from the teacher, I could monitor my learning process in these two skills.

He argued that using CFs in the course was effective as he could develop his monitoring skills for observing his learning process. As a result, he could develop his metacognitive ability upon receiving CFs.

Improving the learners' autonomy

Some of the participants maintained that applying CFs could develop their sense of autonomy in language education in general and in receptive skills in particular. They argued that receiving CFs could develop their independence in learning process. Mona in this regard noted,

> I could recognize my weaknesses in my listening and reading skills through receiving CFs in which it could develop my independence in these two skills. Therefore, I could develop my language proficiency without the help of a teacher.

She believed that applying corrective feedbacks by the teacher could improve her autonomy in listening and reading skills. She expressed that she could monitor her performance to develop her language proficiency herself after receiving CFs. Ahmad in this regard pointed out,

> One of the main benefits of this course was providing adequate CFs by the instructor, which was very beneficial for recognizing the major errors in listening and reading skills. Consequently, it could develop my sense of independence in improving these skills.

He maintained that he could improve his autonomy in the receptive skills through providing CFs by the instructor. In addition, he argued that he could recognize his major errors in these two skills.

All in all, most of the participants in the interview sessions adopted the positive view towards applying different types of CFs in this course.

DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrated that while there was no discernible difference between explicit and metalinguistic CF, explicit CF outperformed recast in candidates' listening and reading skills. The qualitative findings also showed that the participants had a favorable attitude toward using various CFs to improve their reading and listening comprehension. The findings of this study are in line with those of Ellis (2007), who investigated the effects of two distinct forms of corrective feedback—recast and metalingusitic—on the acquisition of two distinct structures: the comparative -er and the past tense morpheme -ed. According to his findings, metalinguistic feedback had a different effect on the process of acquiring the two structures than recasts did on the acquisition of the first one. The findings also agree with those of Ellis et al. (2006), who compared the effects of two types of CFs on learning the English past tense morpheme -ed: recasts and metalinguistic feedback. Their data indicated that the metalinguistic group fared better in the delayed post-test than the recast group (as well as the control group), even though no significant between-group difference was seen in any of the test measures in the immediate post-test. The outcomes also support the findings of Ammar and Spada's (2006) study, which examined the influence of recasts and prompts (such as elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, and repetition) on the development of English third-person singular possessive determiners (her and his). According to their findings, there were notable differences between the two experimental groups and that the prompt group fared better than the recast group. Moreover, the findings align with those of Nassaji (2009), who investigated recasts and elicitation as two types of interactional CF. According to his research, for both kinds of corrective feedback, the more explicit CF was advantageous than the implicit one. The idea that the degree of explicitness is essential to the efficacy of CFs lends credence to the findings of this investigation. The study's findings also corroborate Schmidt's (1990) noticing hypothesis, which holds that pupils are more likely to learn when they focus on

language forms. Additionally, Carroll's (2001) Autonomous Induction Theory—which maintains that feedback cannot effectively promote acquisition unless learners believe they are being corrected—was validated by the findings.

In response to the third research question's findings, the participants took a favourable stance on using CFs in TOEFL Junior course reading and listening. This kind of result is comparable to what ESL participants reported to Amrhein and Nassaji (2010). Furthermore, this result is consistent with that of Chen et al. (2016), who discovered that EFL students had a favorable opinion of obtaining CFs. Schmidt's (1990) noticing hypothesis is supported by the participants' belief that applying CF could improve their noticing skills. Additionally, the qualitative findings demonstrated that the implementation of CFs could enhance the candidates' receptive skills. These findings are consistent with research conducted by Naderi (2014a, 2014b), who examined the impact of two forms of CF—recast and explicit—on the listening comprehension and self-efficacy beliefs of intermediate EFL learners. Her findings demonstrated the value of both CFs in enhancing learners' listening comprehension and self-efficacy. Moreover, it was determined that, of the two CFs, the explicit one was more successful in raising learners' listening comprehension and self-efficacy. The findings, however, disagree with those of Pany et al. (1981), who examined the impact of CF during oral reading on reading comprehension skills. According to their findings, there were not many notable variations between students' comprehension ability at either skill level while they were in CF and when they weren't. Additionally, the participants felt that applying CFs improved their learning autonomy and metacognitive skills, which supported the findings of Dela Cruz and Wong's (2021) investigation into the function of CF in students' critical thinking and metacognition. According to their findings, CF significantly affected the students' metacognitive awareness. Studies in cognitive psychology suggest that by assisting people in anticipating, evaluating, and monitoring incoming information, metacognition supports the metacognitive processing of that information (e.g., Baker, 2017). Furthermore, the findings align with the research conducted by Sharifi and Mal Amiri (2014), who found that both prompts and recasting enhanced the autonomy of EFL learners. Nevertheless, there was no statistically significant difference in the effects of prompts and recasting on autonomy.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine how the three forms of CF—recast, metalinguistic feedback, and explicit correction—affect listening and reading comprehension skills. The results demonstrated that while there was no discernible difference between explicit and metalinguistic CF, explicit CF outperformed recast in candidates' listening and reading skills. The qualitative results also showed that the participants had a favorable attitude toward using various CFs to improve their reading and listening comprehension. Based on the results, it can be said that students' performance on the hearing and reading comprehension sections of the TOEFL Junior exam is considerably altered by the various forms of corrective feedback. It was stated that explicit feedback worked better than the other two types of corrective feedbacks out of the three: recasts, explicit feedback, and metalinguistic feedback. Although the learners in this study were intermediate, previous studies have shown that recasts are more effective for high-proficiency learners (Ammar & Spada, 2006; Mackey & Philp, 1998). Therefore, it can be said that in the current study, explicit and metalinguistic feedbacks were more helpful than recast. Another finding is that students are more likely to be given corrective methods that don't require a lot of cognitive work on their part; in other words, they are more likely to be given explicit feedback or indications.

The results of this study could have educational ramifications for EFL students, EFL instructors, and EFL/ESL content creators. The findings suggested that giving EFL students a variety of CFs may encourage them to be more aware of their linguistic mistakes and identify them in both spoken and written texts. As a result, students might use CFs to improve both their general and specific receptive language skills. The study's conclusion suggested that EFL instructors should make use of CFs since they provide additional material for EFL students. In light of the results, it is advised that EFL teachers use both explicit and implicit feedback when correcting students' faults. The combination of CFs speeds up the process of learning a second language and expands their vocabulary of its structure and functions. The results of this study may persuade authors of curriculum development materials to incorporate explicit, recast, and metalinguistic CFs in their teacher guides. It is advised that textbook authors base their creation of instructional guides on the most beneficial CFs, such as explicit, recast, and metalinguistic CFs, which will be utilized by EFL teachers in Iranian EFL settings, given the value of the explicit and metalinguistic CFs covered in this study.

There were some shortcomings with this investigation. The present study's findings should be empirically examined to determine the generalizability of the data, as it was based on data from a small group of TOEFL Junior candidates in Iranian EFL contexts. Future research could be conducted in different instructional contexts, such as universities, and with different learners, such as IELTS candidates. Furthermore, whereas only three forms of CFs—recast, explicit, and metalinguistic—were used in this study, it may be replicated using other CFs, like repetition and clarification requests.

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