

Corrective feedback and personality types: An investigation of their effect on grammatical accuracy

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Abstract

Corrective feedback studies have proved more useful when coupled with a consideration of personality type factors. This study compared the effects of two different corrective feedback (CF) treatments on 60 Iranian learners' use of past tense. Also, Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) was administered to determine the participants' personality types, i.e., introversion and extraversion. Participants were randomly assigned to three groups of prompt, recast, and control with approximately equal number of students from each personality type. In the two feedback groups, teachers consistently provided corrective feedback, i.e., recasts and prompts, in response to participants' errors during

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the activities, whereas the control group only faced the placebo. Comparisons of the group means from both the immediate and delayed post-tests through a two-way ANOVA revealed that the CF conditions had a positive effect on the participants' grammatical accuracy. However, no significant relationship was seen for personality types and the interaction factor. Post-hoc analyses for both immediate and delayed tests revealed more significant gains by the prompt group as compared to the recast and the control group. The recast group also proved significantly better than the control group.

Keywords: corrective feedback, prompts, recasts, extraversion, introversion, speaking accuracy

1. Introduction

Language proficiency in general can be seen mainly as the product of both psychological and linguistic conditions and options. From psychological point of view, learners differ in how successfully they adapt to, and profit from instruction. In order to predict learners' level of achievement and their ability to adapt to different methods of instruction and their capability to benefit from different learning and teaching strategies, some differences among the learners need to be taken into consideration. Individual differences (IDs) in such areas as aptitude, anxiety, motivation, and personality types are the most important of these differences. An investigation of the effects of ID variables on language learning in classroom has been the focus of a good number of studies (e.g., Ehrman, Leaver, & Oxford, 2003).

Sharp (2008) defines personality as a collection of behavioral patterns and emotional thought that are 'individual-specific' and are relatively stable over time. In the theory of personality, everyone is considered to be different and that individuals are characterized by their

unique and unchanging patterns of types, temperaments, and dispositions. Predicting and explaining IDs in different conditions and situations, including work performance, job satisfaction, and mental health are claimed to be possible by using these basic factors (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Judge, Heller, & Mount, 2002).

Meanwhile, in conducting personality research, the question of how many basic dimensions are needed to distinguish the individuals based on their personality types is of great importance. A number of scholars have introduced hierarchical models that classify behavioral measures into higher-order clusters. The Big Five model is one of the famous hierarchical models (Digman, 1994; Goldberg, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1999). However, there are other somehow equally notable models which try to account for this phenomenon. Among them are Cattell's (1987) 16 factors model, Eysenck's (1970) Big Three factors of Psychoticism, Extraversion, and Neuroticism (PEN), and the Big Six model of Ashton and Lee (2007) which added Honesty–Humility dimension to the Big Five. In all the models, introversion and extraversion occupies a paramount position bearing testimony to the critical role the type plays in the overall performance of learners in general, and the language learning performance in particular. However, the focus on extraversion-introversion dichotomy has only briefly appeared in the applied linguistics literature since the 1990s as a potential correlate of language learning (e.g., Dewaele & Furnham, 2000; Goldberg, 1993; Hwu, 2007; Taylor & MacDonald, 1999; Zhang, 2003). Therefore, this study is an attempt to consider this ID relationship with language learning.

In addition to personality factors, the instructional options of teachers also play a crucial role in developing language proficiency in general and grammatical accuracy in particular. One of the most significant of such options is corrective feedback (CF). In the last 20 years or so, many studies have examined the effects of CF on second language

(L2) learning (e.g. Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006; Lyster, 2004; Lyster & Izquierdo, 2009; Sheen, 2007). These studies include both descriptive and experimental research examining a wide range of variables (e.g. type and amount of feedback, mode of feedback, learners' proficiency levels, and attitudes toward feedback). One of the reasons for this increased interest in CF is related to the observation that although L2 learners in communicative classrooms attain relatively high levels of comprehension ability and, to some extent, fluency in oral production, they continue to experience difficulties with accuracy, particularly in terms of morphology and syntax (Lightbown, Halter, White, & Horst, 2002; Lightbown & Spada, 1990, 1994). The reason for being grammatically inaccurate can be attributed to the insufficiency of comprehensible input and exclusively meaning-based instruction (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Long & Robinson, 1998).

Despite suspicions cast by Truscott (1996), CF is widely considered effective in promoting noticing and is thus helpful to L2 learning (Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Sheen, 2007). An increasing amount of research has been conducted, in both laboratory and classroom contexts, regarding the type of evidence CF provides (Egi, 2007; Leeman, 2003), the effectiveness of different types of CF (Ammar & Spada, 2006; Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006; Lyster, 2004; Lyster & Izquierdo, 2009; Sheen, 2007), and also the typology of CF (Ellis, 2009). Until now, the efficacy of different types of CF on various types of grammatical features, as well as the cognitive mechanisms that these different techniques invoke, remain to be examined (Ellis, 2007). Most studies that compare different CF techniques have targeted rule-based grammatical features (e.g., Ammar & Spada, 2006; Ellis et al., 2006; Lyster, 2004; Sheen, 2007).

Some researchers tend to differentiate feedback in terms of how explicit or implicit it is. Implicit types of feedback often take the form of recasts (Long & Robinson, 1998).

However, this dichotomous classification of feedback can be problematic (Egi, 2007). Research shows that recasts can also be quite explicit (Ellis & Sheen, 2006; Sheen, 2006), depending on the context (e.g., Sheen, 2004) as well as the characteristics of the recasts (e.g., linguistic targets, length, and number of changes). Similarly, explicit types of feedback can also take a variety of forms. For some researchers, explicit feedback involves the indication that an error has been made (e.g., Carroll & Swain, 1993); for others, it also includes metalinguistic information (Ellis et al., 2006), the correct form (Lyster & Ranta, 1997), or both (Sheen, 2007).

In this attempt, we are going to examine the effect of prompts and recasts on target language grammatical accuracy across extravert-introvert learners. In addition, the probable interaction between the personality types and the two types of corrective feedback, i.e., prompts and recasts is also our concern. However, a brief review of the literature is provided first.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Extraversion and Introversion

Since studies on language learning and extraversion have often been carried out by researchers working in different disciplines (e.g., educational psychology, personality psychology, applied linguistics) with different methodologies and expectations, it is difficult to compare them (Muniz-Fernandez & Granizo, 1981). In Furnham's (1990) view, speech production is not the primary interest of personality theorists and they do not find it interesting to conduct an in-depth investigation. He also believes that finding a suitable level for analysis is another problem and theoreticians in the field of personality research want to explain linguistic behavior at a global level and are reluctant to analyze linguistic subsystems in detail. On the other hand, Dewaele and Furnham (2000) state that the existence of the multiplicity

of theories in the field of personality research makes the sociolinguists and psycholinguists get confused and seem uncertain of which traits to measure at which level.

Sharp (2008) reports a study, which was carried out with 100 undergraduates at a university in Hong Kong; the purpose of the study was to investigate personality differences (using the MBTI) and strategy use (using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, SILL) to see if there were any identifiable relationships between these variables and the students' language proficiency (assessed with a standardized English language test). The study also aimed to present data to add to that already available concerning personality typing in Chinese settings. This study failed to find any simple direct relationship between personality, learning strategies and second language proficiency. Some studies have found difference in language learning success related to personality. However, there have been other studies that have also failed to find relationships. Carrell, Prince, and Astika (1996) and Ehrman and Oxford (1995), for example, failed to find any direct, simple relationships in their research on the issue.

Based on the findings of several studies, extraverts were found to be superior to introverts in short-term memory. Among them is the finding of Eysenck (1981) that to retrieve information from long-term memory introverts need more time than extraverts do (Dewaele & Furnham, 2000). One possible reason for this difference, according to Eysenck, could be the overarousal of the introverts that would affect their parallel processing. Introverts would therefore be at a disadvantage in any task involving the processing of several different items of information (Dewaele & Furnham, 2000).

2.2 Corrective Feedback

The literature on focus on form has witnessed an increase in the number of studies that have examined the effect of CF on second language (L2) learning. Both descriptive and

experimental research examining wide range of variables (e.g., type and amount of feedback, mode of feedback, learners' proficiency levels, and attitudes toward feedback) were included in these studies.

The increasing number of SLA studies also shows that CF plays a role in L2 learners' interlanguage development. Two meta-analyses have been done on the use of CF by Mackey and Goo (2007) and Russell and Spada (2006). These two studies provide fruitful findings for ongoing studies in this domain. Mackey and Goo worked on 28 interaction studies and Russell and Spada analyzed 15 CF studies. By identifying the effect size of 0.71 and 1.16, respectively, they found that CF has the facilitative role in L2 development. These results support the consensus that focus on form through CF is beneficial. Russell and Spada concluded, however, that "the wide range of variables examined in CF research is spread rather thin; more work is needed to consolidate efforts and focus on those CF variables that appear to be particularly fruitful for future investigation" (p. 156).

2.3 Recasts vs. Prompts

Recasts and prompts are sometimes used as the complementary moves following different goals for different learners in different context. Each of these techniques can be employed by teachers in accordance with their students' language proficiency and content knowledge and language abilities as well. It is believed, according to Lyster (2002), that employing recasts for the delivery of complex subject matter can be facilitative because they provide supportive and scaffolded help. In this way, moving the lessons ahead would be possible when the target forms in question are beyond the students' current abilities. On the other hand, recasts are considered as exemplars of positive evidence and, as such, can be expected to facilitate the encoding of new target representations when they occur in appropriate discourse context (Braid, 2002; Leeman, 2003).

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 are different in some ways. The difference between them is not only the types of evidence provided but also in the target forms that are given. Nicholas, Lightbown, and Spada (2001) state that learners get the advantage of providing positive evidence, but the question of whether negative evidence is also provided is less clear. Other researchers (e.g., Egi, 2007; 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. Recasts may help learners establish new knowledge by providing positive evidence in classroom input. In contrast to recasts, the goal of prompts is to provide negative evidence because they signal that the learners' utterance is problematic.

According to Lyster (2002), it is claimed that the self-repair process helps learners reanalyze previously learned materials and restructure their interlanguage. In the meantime, according to de Bot (1996), learners benefit more from being pushed to make the right connection personally rather than from hearing the correct structures in the input. Furthermore, prompts may help learners to gain greater control over already acquired forms and to access these forms more quickly.

Prompts range from implicit to explicit but are distinguishable from recasts and explicit correction in terms of what Ortega (2009) called demand, i.e., the degree of conversational urgency to react to the negative feedback. Prompts are not necessarily explicit in terms of the linguistic information they provide but might be considered explicit in terms of their illocutionary force. In other words, by

prompting, a teacher provides cues for learners to draw on their own resources to self-repair, whereas by providing explicit correction or recasting, a teacher both initiates and completes a repair within a single move.

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 structures that are more complex is 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.

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 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. Unlike recasts, prompts do not provide the correct target forms, instead, merely demand learners to produce their own output using the already existing knowledge.

2.4 Noticing Hypothesis and Corrective Feedback

Once a learner becomes aware of a particular grammar point or language feature in input—whether through formal instruction, some type of focus on form activity, or repeated exposure to communicative use of the structure—he or she often continues to notice the structure in subsequent input, particularly if the structure is used frequently (Fotos, 1993; Schmidt, 1990). Repeated noticing and continued awareness of the language feature is important because it appears to raise the students' consciousness of the structure and to facilitate restructuring of the learners' unconscious system of linguistic knowledge. When this happens frequently, learners' unconscious language system begins to develop new hypothesis about the language structure, altering their existing language system or interlanguage. The learner tests the new hypotheses—again unconsciously—by noticing language input and by getting feedback on the accuracy of his or her own output when using the form. In this way, explicit knowledge developed by formal instruction about a language feature has led to the acquisition of that feature although indirectly and over time.

3. Purpose of the Study

In view of the above, and considering the fact that CF, as a significant noticing strategy, still needs to be explored in combination with moderating factors such as personality type, this study was designed to provide more insight into the challenge. More particularly, the probable relationship between personality types of extraversion-introversion and corrective feedback types of prompts and recasts is investigated. In other words, we intend to see if the corrective feedback types of prompts and recasts affect the accuracy of the past tense and if so; whether the extraversion and introversion personality types moderate the probable effect of

prompts and recasts on the grammatical accuracy of the past tense.

4. Methodology

4.1 Participants

The initial participants of this study were 150 Iranian EFL learners (18–25 years old) of English at elementary level from different language institutes in Ardabil. To begin the study, the required warrants and permission were obtained from the learners and the target institutes. Some stimuli were also provided for motivating the learners to participate in the study. Of these participants, based on the scores taken from Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ), and a Placement Test, 78 learners were selected. Half of them were extraverts and the other half were introverts. The participants were randomly assigned into two experimental groups (recast and prompt) and one control group. Each group had 13 extravert and 13 introvert learners.

All the participants attended the placement test, personality test, and the pretest. However, 18 out of 78 participants either did not take part in the immediate posttest or were reluctant to attend the delayed posttest. Therefore, they were excluded and the data obtained from 60 participants were analyzed.

4.2 Instruments

The instruments employed in this study were a placement test, obtained from *Interchange Third Edition Placement and Evaluation Package* (written by Lesley, Hansen, & Zukowski); *Eysenck Personality Questionnaire* (EPQ); and a number of short stories used in immediate and delayed posttest, which were chosen from *Steps to Understanding* (written by L. A. Hill, published by Oxford University Press).

4.3 Data Collection Procedure

To work on the goals set, language learners of both introvert and extravert traits were randomly assigned to prompt and recast groups. The target element to examine was English simple past tense, which was analyzed through the use of the structures in story retelling.

The study followed placement test administration, Eysenck personality questionnaire administration, pretest, treatment sessions, immediate posttest, and delayed posttest design. The whole study was completed in 20 sessions.

Placement test: The first two weeks of the study was completely devoted to the placement test administration in which the participants took part in written and oral parts on the test. The time allotted for the listening (20 items), reading (20 items), and language use (30 items), was 50 minutes. The placement conversation was a 10-minute, face-to-face interaction with individual students that was conducted by the researchers and the institute's teachers. The written test was conducted with whole class attending at once but the oral test was administered individually. The total time allotted for each individual placement was 60 minutes. Two examiners, the researchers and the colleague, conducted the placement test and the host institutes confirmed the final placement of the participants.

Determining personality type: After determining the individuals' level, an attempt was made to figure out their personality type. The *Eysenck Personality Questionnaire* was administered and the results were analyzed.

The pretest: After teaching the target structural feature, i.e., simple past tense, which is one of the features in the book *Interchange 1*, the participants were given a short story chosen from *Steps to Understanding* (written by L. A. Hill, published by Oxford University Press). They had five minutes to read the story and another five minutes to retell the story. Their voices were recorded and transcribed for further analysis.

Treatment sessions: In the third and fourth sessions, all the learners participated in a controlled practice of reading a short story in groups of three or four and then individual learners were asked to retell the story in turn. To do so, students were divided in groups of three and a copy of the selected short story was given to each member of the groups. They were asked to silently read the stories in 5 minutes and then retell the story to each other. The instructor provided the necessary explanations and clarified the problematic words whenever needed. After working on the stories for 10 minutes, one of the members of each group was randomly chosen to retell the story to the class. Prompts and recasts were applied as the CF techniques on the learners' erroneous utterance with whole class attending. In the fifth session, all the learners took part in a semi-controlled practice to make sure that all the individuals were familiar with process of presenting the story in turn. It is worth mentioning that recasts and prompts were provided on past tense errors to individual students with the whole class attending in experimental groups in every session. The control group was not provided with the treatments applied in experimental groups.

Immediate posttest: In the sixth session, all the participants took part in the immediate posttest of the study. In this phase, the individual learners were given some unseen short stories and were asked to choose one of the stories randomly. They were asked to silently read the story in five minutes and retell it. Then, their voices were recorded. The stories were cautiously selected and it was made sure that most of the difficult words in the stories had been taught during treatment sessions. It was to lessen the problem of vocabulary load in checking the learners' structure use.

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 procedure used in this phase was the same, but the stories were different. We exchanged the short stories 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 short stories were used for each testing session, i.e., pre-test, immediate posttest, and delayed posttest.

4.4 Data Analysis

The obtained data were plugged into the SPSS, and the two-way ANOVA was used for analysis. In addition, a post hoc analysis was run on the immediate and delayed post-tests to fine tune the findings.

5. Results

To check whether the different feedback conditions, personality groups, and the interaction of them significantly contributed to the accuracy scores, a two-way ANOVA was run on the immediate post-tests, the results of which appear in Table 1. Through the KS test of normality, it was already made sure that the normality assumption was not violated.

Table 1: The results of the two-way ANOVA for the immediate post-test

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Feedback Conditions	5473.38	2	2736.69	72.65	.0001
Personality	22.69	1	22.69	.60	.44
Feedback Conditions*Personality	46.80	2	23.40	.62	.54

The sig. value for the feedback conditions is .0001 showing that the difference between the feedback conditions was statistically significant ($F = 72.65$, $df = 2$, $p = .0001$). In the meantime, the effect of personality was not statistically significant since the sig. value for personality is greater than alpha level of .05 ($F = .60$, $df = 1$, $p = .44$). Also, as appears in

the table, the findings showed that there was not any statistically significant relationship between personality types and CF types in leading to the accuracy in using past tense. The results also showed that the interaction effect between feedback conditions and personality types was not statistically significant ($F=.62$, $df=2$, $p=.54$). Therefore, the findings did not support the interaction effect of personality and CF conditions. To recheck the findings in the delayed post-test, another two-way ANOVA was run. Table 2 shows the results obtained from the analysis.

Table 2: The Results of the Two-way ANOVA for the Delayed Post-test

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Feedback conditions	2975.98	2	1487.99	17.48	.000
Personality	237.20	1	237.20	2.787	.10
Feedback conditions*Personality	133.98	2	66.99	.787	.46

As shown in in Table 2, the results of the delayed post-test were similar to the results for the immediate post-tests.

Post-hoc Scheffe tests performed on the feedback conditions in the immediate and delayed post-tests. Table 3 shows the results in the immediate post-test. According to the Scheffe tests, in the immediate post-test, the prompt group outperformed both the recast and the control group, and the recast group worked better than the control group. The difference among the groups was found to be statistically significant.

Table 3: The results of the post-hoc Sheffe test for the CF conditions in the immediate post-test

Group 1	Group 2	Mean difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Prompt	Recast	11.6000*	1.94	0.000
	Control	23.3950*	1.94	0.000
Recast	Prompt	-11.6000*	1.94	0.000
	Control	11.7950*	1.94	0.000
Control	Prompt	-23.3950*	1.94	0.000
	Recast	-11.7950*	1.94	0.000

The Scheffe test was repeated for the delayed post-test, which was administered two weeks after the immediate test. The results appear in Table 4.

Table 4: The results of the post-hoc Scheffe test for the CF conditions in the delayed post-test

Group 1	Group 2	Mean difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Prompt	Recast	7.5750*	1.94	.042
	Control	17.2100*	1.94	.000
Recast	Prompt	-7.5750*	1.94	.042
	Control	9.6350*	1.94	.007
Control	Prompt	-17.2100*	1.94	.000
	Recast	-9.6350*	1.94	.007

As shown in Table 4, the results show the superiority of the prompt over the recast and the control group on the one hand, and the better result for the recast group as compared to the control group, on the other.

6. Discussion

This study sought to investigate, in the first place, whether CF had any effect on L2 accuracy in producing past tense. It was also aimed to reveal which of the feedback conditions i.e.,

prompt or recast, was possibly more useful than the other. On the other hand, and more significantly, we were interested in finding out if there was any possible relationship between personality types, i.e., introvert and extravert, and learners' responses to recasts and prompts in learning English simple past tense.

The statistical results of the comparison between CF conditions (+prompt –recast, +recast –prompt, –prompt –recast) confirmed the idea that CF improves the learners' target language accuracy. This finding is in line 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.

This study further showed that prompts were superior to recasts. It can be seen that 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). Moreover, it is in line with Yang and Lyster's (2010) study in which they concluded that learners benefit more from prompts than from recasts. According to de Bot (1996), learners benefit more from being pushed to make the right connection on one's own than from hearing the correct structures in the input. Furthermore, prompts may help learners to gain greater control over already acquired forms and to access these forms more quickly.

In the meantime, it was aimed to find out whether there is a relationship between personality types, i.e., introvert and extravert, and learners' responses to recasts and prompts in leading to the target language grammatical accuracy. The results revealed that although in the prompt group extraverts scored a little bit higher than the introverts in both the immediate and delayed post-tests, the difference among them was not statistically significant. Similarly, in the recast group, the results did not show any statistically significant difference

between introverts and extraverts in the post-tests. Both introverts and extraverts equally took advantage of treatments, and personality types did not appear to play a moderating role.

In interpreting these results, we should also consider the differential effectiveness of CF types depending on the linguistic target structure. Ortega and Long (1997) found that recasts aided learners' adverb placement but not their use of possessive pronouns. Havranek and Cesnik (2001) reported that CF, which included large numbers of recasts, had a greater effect on verb inflections and rule-governed auxiliary use than on prepositions and tense choice.

We were also interested to investigate the interaction of CFs and personality types in acquiring grammatical accuracy. As seen above, this study did not find any interaction between personality types and feedback conditions in terms of target language accuracy. Some studies have found difference in language learning success related to personality and teachers continue to regard personality as of considerable importance in learning (e.g., Blease, 1986). However, there have been other studies that have also failed to find any relationships. Carrell et al. (1996), Ehrman and Oxford (1995), for example, failed to find any direct, simple relationships in their research on the issue. Why then, does the current study, like some others, have such difficulty in establishing mediating relationships between these variables? One reason may be that personality preferences, as set out in the EPQ, provide no indication of student maturity, motivation, or of situational factors (a point also noted by Carrell et al., 1996). It is also possible that these mixed findings are related to the learners' developmental readiness, that is, they were more ready to acquire some features than the others were.

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 (Ellis, 2002). Thus, if the recasts or any other CF technique target features that a learner is developmentally

primed to acquire, potentially those techniques will be effective; if the techniques target features that lie too far beyond the learner's current stage of development, they are likely to fail. Mackey and Philp (1998) provided convincing evidence that this is the case, at least for question forms. Nicholas et al. (2001) suggested, "Recasts can be effective if the learner has already begun to use a particular linguistic feature and is in a position to choose between linguistic alternatives" (p. 752). This, however, is to stake a claim for recasts increasing control over existing knowledge rather than triggering new knowledge and, as such, stands in contrast to the claim that the real value of recasts lies in their promotion of new knowledge.

7. Conclusion

This research suggested that learners benefit more from prompts than recasts regardless of their personality types. Regarding the personality types, extravert learners performed better than introverts in the prompt group, though not significantly. In the recast group, both introverts and extraverts equally took the advantage of recasts in comparison to the control group. However, no significant difference was seen in superiority of extraverts over introverts in both groups.

In addition, the present study examined if personality types would mediate the effect of prompts and recasts on the target language accuracy. The analyses of the results showed a contradictory finding to the formulated hypotheses. It was concluded that although personality is claimed to play a crucial role in language learning, the moderating effect of that was not supported in this study. In fact, the interaction effect between personality and CF did not appear significant.

The contradictory results and mixed findings across classroom and experimental studies on the benefits of prompts and recasts for L2 acquisition call for further research, particularly in classroom contexts. Given the wide range of

CF types that constitute both explicit correction and prompts, further research is also warranted to identify the components of CF types that might contribute to their effectiveness. It is also possible that other ID factors such as language aptitude, general motivation, and attitudes toward correction will influence learners' receptivity to CF and, hence, its effectiveness. Additionally, further research is needed to probe the many learner characteristics that were not accounted for in this study but that are known to mediate the effects of CF for individual learners.

Corrective feedbacks can have differential effects on different language features. For one thing, learners' language background might be an interfering factor on the effectiveness of CFs. Thus, what is needed is research that investigates the acquisition of features that learners have not yet begun to acquire. Such research is currently lacking as studies to date have examined features that learners have already partially acquired. There is an obvious need to examine more closely how individual learners react to and benefit from CF in relation to their various personality types.

However, according to the results of this study, it can be suggested to language teachers that they can confidently take advantage of CF techniques of prompting and recasting in order to help language learners improve their accuracy, specifically the past tense structure without a concern for the differences in personality types of introversion and extroversion among learners.

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Abdi and Mohammadi

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