

## **A Survey of the Effect of Recast and Prompt by Teachers on Iranian EFL Student's Grammar with High and Low Anxiety Level**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of the present study was to explore if providing recast and prompt by teacher would have different effects on the grammatical development of Iranian learners of English as a foreign language with high and low anxiety level. In fact, the study investigated the effectiveness of corrective feedback on learners' grammatical achievement. After administering a proficiency test, sixty participants out of eighty-five were selected from the intact classes at two language institutes in Kerman. These selected participants were randomly assigned to three groups namely, prompt, recast and control group each comprising of twenty participants. Before starting the treatment, all participants were given a pre-test to assess their prior level of English knowledge and then Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), a 33-item questionnaire to find out their degree of anxiety. During a four-session treatment, participants were given corrective feedback (recasts and prompts) while control group did not receive any kind of feedback. Then at the end of the study a post-test was given to participants to assess their knowledge after treatment. The obtained results indicated that participants, who received planned focus on form using recasts feedback, outperformed those students who received planned focus on form in terms of prompts feedback and control group in the post-test. All in all, the results also revealed that regardless of their anxiety level both groups had similar beliefs about CF and strongly favored receiving frequent CF in English classes when they were made aware of the purpose, significance, and types of CF.

**Keywords:** recast, prompt, feedback, corrective feedback, error correction, grammar acquisition, anxiety

### **INTRODUCTION**

Having a long history, a great number of studies have been carried out in order to find out the effects of corrective feedback (CF) on second or foreign language learning. This efficacy of corrective feedback has been the subject of much controversy among educationalists, including published debate and several decades of research activity in

this area and therefore has received considerable attention and studies (Darabad, 2013). Studies (Lightbown, Halter, White, & Horst, 2002; Lightbown & Spada, 1994) have tried to examine a wide range of variables such as type and extend of feedback, mode of feedback, learners' point of view toward feedback, and learners' proficiency levels. Based on some studies (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Long & Robinson, 1998), being grammatically inaccurate may have a reason that can be attributed to the inadequacy of comprehensible input and particularly meaning-based teaching.

In addition to the role of CF, affective variables were also accounted for to be examined in alignment with a wide range of variables such as type and extend of feedback, mode of feedback, learners' point of view toward feedback, and learners' proficiency levels (Doughty & Williams, 1998). Based on some studies (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Long & Robinson, 1998), being grammatically inaccurate may have a reason that can be attributed to the inadequacy of comprehensible input and particularly meaning-based teaching. In this regard, Noels, Pelletier, and Vallerand (2000) indicated that affective variables like orientations, attitude, motivation, and anxiety were at least as significance as language aptitude for predicting L2 success. Oxford (1999) focused on the substantial role of affective side of the learners in learning success or failure.

One of the primary reasons why there has been such an interest in CF is related to the observation that although L2 learners in communicative classrooms attain relatively high levels of comprehension ability, they have problems of fluency in oral production. Currently, there is a renewed interest in the effect of form-focused instruction and CF on language acquisition. A reason is that the level of ultimate L2 attainment varies enormously between learners in all contexts, suggesting that implicit learning from language input is insufficient. For successful adult SLA, it may be necessary to consciously learn certain features of the target language, for instance through CF. So far, however, it proves difficult to assess the effect of CF on language acquisition.

Corrective feedback can be broadly assumed as responses to learner utterances that contain an error. Different types of feedback presumably have a different impact on the acquisition process. Lyster & Ranta (1997) distinguish six types in their often-cited classroom observation study:

1. Explicit feedback: teacher provides the correct form and clearly indicates that what the student said was incorrect.
2. Recasts: the teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance, minus the error.
3. Clarification requests: question indicating that the utterance has been misunderstood or ill-formed and that a repetition or reformulation is required.
4. Metalinguistic feedback contains either comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the student's utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form.

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

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

Types (2) and (6) give feedback implicitly. It depends on the learner to notice that an error was made; the other types are explicit in indicating that an error occurred. The interpretation of the distinction is related to the setting of the feedback, e.g., an implicit recast may be argued to be explicit in formal classroom settings. Additionally, intonation and visual cues accompanying CF delivery should be taken into account.

In analyses of CF in the classroom, recasts turned out to be by far the most frequent technique for error correction, especially in communicative contexts, because they cause less learner anxiety and do not disrupt the flow of communication. However, because they are so discrete, recasts may go unnoticed. Clarification requests, metalinguistic clues and elicitation, are so-called negotiation of form techniques, collectively called prompts. They indicate that an error was made without providing the correct form. These feedback moves are considered to be effective because they induce learners to reprocess their output, and to produce 'pushed output', but have been criticized because they would contribute to explicit linguistic knowledge and not to competence.

An increasing number of studies have been investigating whether direct (explicit) and indirect (implicit) feedback strategies are more likely to help students improve the accuracy of their writings (Long, 1996). Explicit correction refers to overt correction or grammatical explanation of the error by the marker (Lee, 2004) while implicit correction involves reformulation of learners' utterances through recast or clarification requests. For example, if a student writes an ill-formed sentence like 'I play sports two for a week', the teacher may underline it and write 'Wow! You play sports twice a week. How healthy you are!' (Recast) to highlight the correct form through his/her reformulation or 'What do you mean here?' (clarification request) to pinpoint that the utterance is unclear and is not fully understood by the teacher, requiring the student to ponder over the correct expression and eliciting the phrase 'two times a week' or 'twice a week'.

Several studies reported that implicit feedback leads to either greater or similar levels of accuracy over time (Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 2002; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Lee, 2004) through increased student engagement and attention to forms and problems (Ferris, 2002). Ellis (2007), based on the perspectives of Carroll and Swain (1993) and Lyster (2004), suggested that explicit feedback is more effective in both eliciting the learner's immediate correct use of the structure and in eliciting subsequent correct use. It may also be suitable for lower achievers and when the errors are too difficult for students to self-correct, such as syntactical and lexical errors (Ferris, 2003). However, Truscott (1996) argued that direct correction is not useful for student's development in accuracy as students are demotivated by the frustration of their errors, resulting in sustained low language accuracy. It is very teacher-dominant and does not provide rooms for

students to self-correct and solve their own learning problems. It also creates tension among students as they are worried about making a lot of mistakes and receiving a lot of red marks which impede students from having the desire to improve their writing accuracy.

In contrast, implicit feedback involves students in the correction process, engages them cognitively and assists them in provoking thoughts on how to use the correct form to express their meaning. According to the noticing hypothesis, in order for input to become intake for L2 learning, some degree of noticing must occur, and that it is implicit corrective feedback that triggers learners' noticing of gaps between the target norms and their interlanguage, and thus leads to subsequent grammatical restructuring (Gass, 1997). In the long term, it also helps them to become autonomous learners who are more sensitive to their own mistakes and are capable of reading their work reflectively and critically, thus promoting writing accuracy through self-awareness of mistakes and proof-reading.

It seems likely both implicit and explicit feedback can be successful on specific occasions if they are applied with optimal skill and timing regarding the developmental stages of learners. The skill of speaking has been recently considered by many methodologists a priority in language teaching. Of all the four skills, Ur (1996) concludes, speaking seems intuitively the most important. Most language learners, she adds, are primarily interested in learning to speak.

The opponents of corrective feedback believe that second language acquisition is the result of implicit processes operating together with the reception of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985). They believe that all kinds of corrective feedback are 'negative assessment' and should be avoided as far as possible since they function as 'punishment' and may inhibit or discourage learning). However, other researchers claimed that explicit knowledge can influence, or transform into, implicit knowledge (weak or strong interface position). According to this view, CF may be effective in adult L2 learning. Because of their importance, oral skills and abilities cannot be ignored. Therefore, teachers may make sure that students in the class receive correct input and produce correct output. Corrective feedback (CF) is one of the tools teachers have at their disposal to monitor students' deviations. Recasts and prompts are two types of corrective feedback with two different approaches and possibly with different results and effects. Hence, the present study aims to study the effects of each type of the corrective feedbacks, which are believed to be fruitful. Meanwhile, anxiety, which plays a key role in this regard and affects the oral accuracy regarding the type of CF, can be investigated as well.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study looks into the following research questions:

RQ1: Does recast have any statistically significant effect on grammatical accuracy in speaking?

RQ2: Does prompt have any statistically significant effect on grammatical accuracy in speaking?

RQ3: Does the level of anxiety among students affect recast effectiveness?

RQ4: Does the level of anxiety among students affect prompt effectiveness?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Participants**

The population of this study consisted of 85 Iranian EFL learners with the age range of 15 to 20 years old at upper-intermediate level from Farda and Kusha language institutes in Kerman. The participants included both genders. All of these participants were selected based on their scores on Oxford Placement Test (OPT), which was used to homogenize the students. Then 60 qualified participants were randomly assigned into two experimental groups (recast and prompt) and one control group.

All the participants attended the placement test and a pre-test. The pre-test was conducted to observe the target grammatical structure of the students before the treatment process in which the two methods of corrective feedback (CF) were applied.

### **Instruments**

To collect the required data, following instruments were utilized in this study. The instrumentation used in this study included a pre-test, a treatment and a post-test, an anxiety questionnaire.

#### ***Oxford Placement Test***

The Oxford Placement Test was primarily used in order to measure and determine the participants' level of general English language proficiency and ensure their homogeneity. The OPT is often used by ELT researchers as the language proficiency test in which participants scores according to the test norms are ranked in 6 levels namely from beginners to advanced levels. This test consists of 60 items in the form of multiple choice questions. Since the participants of the present study were at intermediate level, they were supposed to answer the questions and choose the correct answer from among the alternatives for the questions. The required time to complete the test was 55minutes.

#### ***Pre-Test and Post-Test***

The pre-test and post-test were picture description tests which were devised to find the grammatical accuracy of the students' speech in terms of grammatical items including coordinating conjunctions, subordinators, relative clauses, noun clauses and noun phrases; 60 multiple-choice questions were designed and randomly divided into pre and immediate post-tests. The tests were pilot tested with a group of 30 students with similar characteristics to those from the actual study. Students were required to choose

from one of three options for each question. Each correct response was awarded a score of one and each incorrect one was awarded a score of zero. The internal consistency value for the tests was .79 that was acceptable. The pre-test and the post-test were equal in nature but different in some pictures.

### ***Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)***

This scale developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). It is a 33-item, five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The answers to each item can be one of these: strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; and strongly disagree. For each item a score was given ranging from 5 for strongly agree to 1 for strongly disagree. This test administered before the treatment process. According to this questionnaire students were divided into low anxiety learners and high anxiety learners.

### ***Instructional Materials***

The applied materials include:

- The course book American English File 1 (2008) was used as the learners' course book in the target institutes.
- The book 'Steps to Understanding Introductory' by L. G. Alexander was used as a graded series of books, containing short stories for oral retelling.

### ***Procedure***

To collect the data, the OPT was administered to 85 participants at the very outset. The time given was 55 minutes and the correct answer for each item received one point. After taking the exam, each participant was rendered a grade based on their performance on the OPT. Out of these participants, 60 students whose grades were between one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected. Their mean scores and standard deviations were used to select a homogenous intermediate level sample of L2 learners. After this step and before starting the treatment process, all participants were given a pre-test to assess their prior level of English knowledge and then FLCAS, a 33-item questionnaire to find out their degree of anxiety. Then at the end of the study to a post-test was given to participants to assess their knowledge after treatment.

In order to investigate feedback techniques used by L2 teachers in reading comprehension classes, learners were observed while attending the class. Each observation lasted for nearly forty minutes, totally 160 minutes. The observer who was the researcher, did not have any interference in the classroom process or discourse, merely sitting, observing, writing, and audio recording. All that happened in the reading comprehension classes were audio- recorded to be transcribed and coded later. In order to ensure the inter-rater reliability of the data, 25% of the data was selected and coded by another graduate student based on a prepared checklist. The correlation was computed, there was a high correlation between the coding of the first and the second

raters' performance. The inter-rater reliability was ( $r = 0.97$ ,  $p = .000$ ). As the correlation was high, the researcher herself coded the remaining transcriptions.

### Transcription and Coding Procedure

The following coding system was used in transcribing and analyzing the data:

- CF for Corrective Feedback
  - CF1 for Explicit correction
  - CF2 for Recast
  - CF3 for Clarification Request
  - CF4 for Metalinguistic Feedback
  - CF5 for Elicitation
  - PF for Positive Feedback
  - PF1 for Acceptance
  - PF2 for Rephrasing
  - PF3 for Repetition
  - PF4 for Acknowledgement
  - T for Teacher
  - S1, S2... for single and different students
- 
- Episode 1
  - T: what is this reading about?
  - S1: It is about Islands that are going to destroy.
  - (CF1) T: going to be destroyed.
  - Episode 2 T: What happened for Lisa?
  - S3: She goes to the store and asked for a cold drink.
  - (CF4) T: It should be in the past.
  - S3: She went to the store.
  - Episode 3 S1: What did he do at them reactions?
  - (CF2) T: What did he do, when he saw their reactions?
  - Episode 4 T: What is the meaning of release? S1: Let's go.
  - (CF3) T: What do you mean?
  - S1: Set free.
  - Episode 5 T: What does threat mean?
  - S1: be in danger.
  - (PF3) T: be in danger.
  - Episode 6 T: What is the meaning of rephrase?
  - S3: say something with different words.
  - (PF2)T: Exactly, when you paraphrase something you have the same meaning but you put it in another way.
  - Episode 7 T: What is capsicum?
  - S1: pepper.
  - (PF1) T: Yeah, that's right.

- Episode 8 T: Why can be living in a foreign country confusing? What are the reasons?
- S1: Because you maybe cannot understand the body language or the response in that language.

### *The Timing of Error Correction*

The timing of corrective feedback depended on whether it was a mistake or an error in Corder's (1967) sense. In the case of competence errors, the decision was dictated by a number of factors: was it a new error or one that's been encountered before? Should it be dealt with immediately or should it be postponed (Allwright & Bailey, 1991)? There were advantages and disadvantages to any timing. Immediate treatment interrupted learners' flow and might not be positively effective (Long, 1996). Postponing it to a future lesson was less effective, as time elapsed between the error and the treatment (Chaudron, 1988). Yet this might be necessary, particularly if the error was common to the whole class (Holley & King, 1974).

### *Implementation*

Participants in the two experimental groups were instructed to work with the tests in the writing that formed a narrative. The students were encouraged to negotiate how to write the best story from the pictures and to interact in English at all times. They were allotted as much time as needed within the class period and all the pairs finished the task within the 50 minutes of class time.

### *Reformulation Condition*

Following the students' writing session, the teacher-researcher made copies of the students' original texts and reformulated each story to make it sound native-like (in terms of both accuracy and idiomaticity) while keeping their original meaning intact. Grammar errors (such as verb formation, punctuation, subject-verb agreement and choice of preposition) were corrected and inaccurate vocabulary choices and inappropriate use of cohesive devices were revised where deemed necessary.

The noticing session (Session 2) took place two days later. Our participants were handed the picture prompt, their original text, the teacher-researcher's reformulated version of it, and a noticing table to fill in during the comparison of their text with the reformulated version. We opted for a form of guided noticing (the noticing table) in view of previous findings on the relationship between depth of processing of noticing and learning outcomes. In particular, Qi and Lapkin's (2001) claim was taken into account that noticing with understanding has more positive effects than noticing without understanding or "noticing for no articulated reason" (p. 71). The researcher tried to promote this noticing with understanding by asking the participants to fill in a table in which they had to (i) annotate their errors and their corresponding reformulation (ii) decide which type of error it was (grammar, lexis or discourse), and, (iii) state whether or not they accepted the reformulation, as well as provide reasons for not incorporating the reformulation, when applicable. Given previous suggestions on



the relevance of allowing plenty of time for students to engage in noticing processes (Sachs & Polio, 2007), our participants were given 50 minutes, and all of them finished within this time limit.

Session 3 took place two days later. As the focus of the study was the effect of CF rather than on collaborative writing, the rewriting session was performed individually, as was also the case of previous research (Sachs & Polio, 2007). The students sat individually and the teacher-researcher handed them the picture prompt, their original story and a blank sheet of paper and asked them to rewrite the story as close as possible to the accepted reformulated version they had worked on in Session 2. The students were not allowed to ask any questions or to communicate with their peers, and they were given a maximum of 45 minutes to complete the assignment. All the students completed the task during this time limit.

#### *Error correction Condition*

The Error Correction treatment sessions took place during the second week and the procedure followed was exactly the same as the one described for the Reformulation condition. In Session 1 students again collaboratively wrote a text based on a picture prompt. The teacher researcher collected the texts and she corrected students' errors (related to grammar, vocabulary and textual cohesion) in a copied version of students' original texts.

### **Data Analysis**

The analysis of the data was used as the scientific fundamental step of a scientific research by which all research activities were controlled and directed to achieve the results. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics, such as the mean, variance, and standard deviation were applied and frequency distribution scores plot was designed. Then, inferential statistics regarding the effect of recast and prompt on the learners' grammatical accuracy in speaking as well as investigating the effectiveness of anxiety level on both groups were provided.

### **RESULTS**

#### *OPT and Normal Distribution of Data*

In order to have homogenized participants in terms of their general English language proficiency, the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered. The descriptive analysis for the OPT test is displayed in the following table.

**Table 1.** The Descriptive Statistics of the OPT Test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
OPT	85	29.00	51.00	39.7176	5.07471
Valid N (listwise)	85				

Table 1 above shows the descriptive statistics of the OPT test. As it can be seen in Table 1 above, the mean and the standard deviation of the participants were 39.71 and 5.07 respectively.

Out of 85 participants, 60 were considered as homogenous members based on their scores of OPT ranging from 37 to 47 (upper-intermediate level). The 60 homogenized participants were randomly put into 2 groups of experimental and one control group. The descriptive statistics of the three groups is shown below.

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics for the Control, Recast, and the Prompt groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
control	20	41.9000	2.73188	37.00	46.00
recast	20	41.9500	2.64525	37.00	46.00
prompt	20	41.8000	2.54641	37.00	46.00
Total	60	41.8833	2.59786	37.00	46.00

As Table 2 shows, the mean scores of the control, recast, and the prompt groups are 41.90, 41.95 and 41.80 respectively. Also, the standard deviation of the control, recast, and the prompt groups are 2.73, 2.64 and 2.54 respectively.

Before taking the research questions into account, the control and the experimental groups should be compared on their pre-test of grammar accuracy in speaking in order to prove their homogeneity.

**Table 3.** Descriptive Statistics for the Control, Recast, and the Prompt groups on their Pre-test of Grammar Accuracy

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cont_Pre-test	20	2.00	5.00	3.7500	.85070
Recast_Pre-test	20	3.00	5.00	3.5500	.60481
Prompt_Pre-test	20	2.00	5.00	3.6000	.75394
Valid N (listwise)	20				

As Table 3 presents, the mean scores of the control, recast, and the prompt groups on their pre-test of grammar accuracy are 3.75, 3.55, and 3.60, respectively.

**Table 4.** Test of Normality for the Control, Recast, and the Prompt groups on their Pre-test of Grammar Accuracy

	Groups1_2_3	Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test_Scores	Control	.626	20	.000
	Recast	.855	20	.006
	Prompt	.859	20	.007

The result of the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality shows that the data are not normally distributed for the three sets of scores ( $\text{Sig} < .05$ ). Therefore, the appropriate test for mean comparison would be the Kruskal-Wallis test.

**Table 5.** The Kruskal-Wallis Test for the Mean Comparison of the Three Groups on their Pre-test

	Pre-test_Scores
Chi-Square	.550
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.759

The result of the Kruskal-Wallis Test showed that there was no statistically significant difference among the three groups on their pretest of grammar accuracy,  $\chi^2(2) = .550$ ,  $p > .05$ .

### First Research Question

The first research question of the study was 'does recast have any statistically significant effect on grammatical accuracy in speaking?'. Therefore, the control and the recast groups should be compared on their post-test of grammatical accuracy in speaking. Table 6 below shows the test of normality.

**Table 6.** Test of Normality for the Post-test of the Control and the Recast Groups

	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Cont_Post-test	.832	20	.003
Recast_Post-test	.771	20	.000

The result of the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality shows that the data are not normally distributed for the two sets of scores ( $\text{Sig} < .05$ ). Therefore, the appropriate test for mean comparison would be the Mann-Whitney U test. The descriptive statistics of the two groups is shown below.

**Table 7.** Descriptive Statistics for the Control and the Recast Groups on their Post-test of Grammar Accuracy

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cont_Post-test	20	2.00	5.00	4.0000	.97333
Recast_Post-test	20	5.00	7.00	5.8000	.61559
Valid N (listwise)	20				

The mean scores for the post-test of control and recast groups were 4 and 5.8 respectively.

**Table 8.** The Result of the Mann-Whitney U Test for the comparison of the Control and the Recast Groups on their Post-test of Grammar Accuracy

	Post-test_Scores
Mann-Whitney U	61.000
Wilcoxon W	271.000
Z	-3.970
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.000 <sup>b</sup>

The result of the Mann-Whitney U Test showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups on their post-test of grammar accuracy,  $U = 61$ ,  $p < .05$ , therefore, the group provided with recast feedback could improve their grammar accuracy in their speaking.

## Second Research Question

The second research question was the study aimed at investigating whether prompt have any statistically significant effect on grammatical accuracy in speaking. To do so, the control and the prompt groups should be compared on their post-test of grammatical accuracy in speaking. Table 9 below shows the test of normality.

**Table 9.** Test of Normality for the Post-test of the Control and the Prompt Groups

	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Cont_Post-test	.832	20	.003
Prompt_Post-test	.850	20	.005

The result of the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality shows that the data are not normally distributed for the two sets of scores ( $\text{Sig} < .05$ ). Therefore, the appropriate test for mean comparison would be the Mann-Whitney U test. The descriptive statistics of the two groups is shown below.

**Table 10.** Descriptive Statistics for the Control and the Prompt Groups on their Post-test of Grammar Accuracy

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cont_Post-test	20	2.00	5.00	4.0000	.97333
Prompt_Post-test	20	3.00	6.00	4.2000	.76777
Valid N (listwise)	20				

The mean scores for the post-test of control and prompt groups were 4 and 4.2 respectively.

**Table 11.** The Result of the Mann-Whitney U Test for the comparison of the Control and the Prompt Groups on their Post-test of Grammar Accuracy

	Post-test_Scores
Mann-Whitney U	183.500
Wilcoxon W	393.500
Z	-.473
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.636
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.659 <sup>b</sup>

The result of the Mann-Whitney U Test showed that there was not any statistically significant difference between the two groups on their post-test of grammar accuracy,  $U = 183.50$ ,  $p > .05$ . It can therefore be concluded that, despite the positive effect of recast, arming the learners with prompt feedback could not pave the way for them to reduce their grammatical errors while speaking.

### Third Research Question

The third research question of the study investigated the effectiveness of the level of anxiety among students on the group provided with recast. Hence, the participants of the recast group should be divided into two groups of low and high anxiety based on their scores. The researcher first arranged the scores based on descending order and then made a low and a high group. Scores from 72 to 94 were considered low and scores from 95 to 120 were considered high anxiety.

**Table 12.** Descriptive Analysis of the High and Low Groups in the Recast Group

	High_Low	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Anxiety_Recast	high	10	106.9000	8.76166	2.77068
	low	10	85.3000	8.06983	2.55191

As Table above shows, the mean scores for the high and low anxiety participants in the recast group were 106.90 and 85.30 respectively. Table 13 below shows the test of normality.

**Table 13.** Test of Normality for the High and Low Groups in the Recast Group

	High_Low	Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.
Recast_Post-test	high	.752	10	.004
	low	.802	10	.015

The result of the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality shows that the data are not normally distributed for the two sets of scores (Sig<.05). Therefore, the appropriate test for mean comparison would be the Mann-Whitney U test.

**Table 14.** The Mann-Whitney U Test for the Comparison of the High and Low Anxiety Groups in the Recast Group

	Recast_Post-test
Mann-Whitney U	41.000
Wilcoxon W	96.000
Z	-.781
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.435
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.529 <sup>b</sup>

The result of the Mann-Whitney U Test showed that there was not any statistically significant difference between the high and low anxiety participants on their grammar accuracy in the recast group,  $U = 41$ ,  $p > .05$ . Hence, the level of anxiety did not have any impact on the learners provided with recast.

### Fourth Research Question

The fourth question of the study was ‘does the level of anxiety among students affect prompt effectiveness?’. In this regard, the participants of the prompt group should be divided into two groups of low and high anxiety based on their scores. The researcher

arranged the scores descending and then made a low and a high group, each having 10 participants. Scores from 79 to 98 were considered low and scores from 100 to 124 were considered high anxiety.

**Table 15.** Descriptive Analysis of the High and Low Groups in the Prompt Group

	High_Low	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Anxiety_Prompt	high	10	111.9000	6.38488	2.01908
	low	10	89.7000	7.00872	2.21635

As Table above shows, the mean scores for the high and low anxiety participants in the prompt group were 111.90 and 89.70 respectively. Table 16 below shows the test of normality.

**Table 16.** Test of Normality for the High and Low Groups in the Prompt Group

	High_Low	Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.
Prompt_Post-test	high	.815	10	.022
	low	.890	10	.172

The result of the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality shows that the data in the high group are not normally distributed ( $\text{Sig} < .05$ ). Therefore, the appropriate test for mean comparison would be the Mann-Whitney U test.

**Table 17.** The Mann-Whitney U Test for the Comparison of the High and Low Anxiety Groups in the Prompt Group

	Prompt_Post-test
Mann-Whitney U	37.000
Wilcoxon W	92.000
Z	-1.088
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.277
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.353 <sup>b</sup>

The result of the Mann-Whitney U Test showed that there was not any statistically significant difference between the high and low anxiety participants on their grammar accuracy in the prompt group,  $U = 37$ ,  $p > .05$ , therefore, no significant effect of anxiety level on the learners in the prompt group was found.

To conclude, the study highlighted the positive effect of recast on the learners' grammatical accuracy in speaking. However, prompt feedback was not found to significantly affect the learners' accuracy in their speaking. As to the effectiveness of anxiety level of the learners, no statistically significant differences were observed with respect to both groups provided with recast and prompt.

## DISCUSSION

The present study targeted to investigate the relative effectiveness of recast and prompt by teacher on Iranian EFL student's grammar with high and low anxiety level and

answer to four research questions. To do so, 85 Iranian EFL learners both male and female studying English at private English Language institute in Kerman, Kerman province, Iran participated in this study. Having been taught for 4 sessions, a pre-test and a post-test which were devised to find the grammatical accuracy of the students' speech in terms of syntactic agreement associated with 's' inflection and the present forms of the verb 'to be' were administered to all three groups. The analysis of these tests revealed that the recast experimental group had the best performance across all groups. The results of Kruskal-Wallis Test revealed that there was no statistically significant difference among the three groups on their pre-test of grammar accuracy.

Accordingly, in order to answer the first question, the results of students in control group and those on recast group who received planned focus on form in terms of recasts feedback should be compared on post-test of grammatical accuracy in speaking. The results of the Mann-Whitney U Test indicated that there was a significant difference between the recast and the control groups on their post-test of grammar accuracy,  $U = 61, p < .05$ .

The second research question was answered using the same Mann-Whitney U Test again; the result showed that there was not any statistically significant difference between the participants of control group and the group whose participants received planned focus on form using prompts on their post-test of grammar accuracy,  $U = 183.50, p > .05$ .

In addition, to answer the third question for this study, the researcher divided the participants of the recast group into two groups of low and high anxiety based on their scores. The researcher first arranged the scores based on descending order and then made a low and a high group. The result of the Mann-Whitney U Test revealed that there was not any statistically significant difference between the high and low anxiety participants on their grammar accuracy in the recast group,  $U = 41, p > .05$ .

As to the fourth research question, the participants of the prompt group should be divided into two groups of low and high anxiety based on their scores. The researcher arranged the scores based on descending order and then made a low and a high group, each having 10 participants. The result of the Mann-Whitney U Test showed that there was not any statistically significant difference between the high and low anxiety participants on their grammar accuracy in the prompt group,  $U = 37, p > .05$ .

Overall, the results indicated that participants, who received planned focus on form using recasts feedback, outperformed those students who received planned focus on form in terms of prompts feedback and control group in the post-test. Findings of this study are not congruent with the findings of Ranta and Lyster (2007) in that recasts are least effective in facilitating the uptake, a student response to CF, of L2 forms. Lyster (1998) states that recasts are vague and ambiguous and may be L2 learners perceive it as confirmation of the meaning rather than feedback on form; some researchers such as Long and Robinson (1998) advocate and indicated the idea that recasts are significant

effective in SLA and also in showing second language learners how their interlanguage is different from the L2.

According to Lyster and Ranta's (1997) observation, teacher feedback has been classified into six types: explicit correction, recast, clarification request, metalinguistic clues, elicitation, and repetition. One of these feedbacks or combination of some of them can be used by L2 teachers while giving feedback. CF is divided into two classifications i.e. implicit or explicit. In explicit feedback, the L2 teacher overtly states the committed errors by the L2 learner; whereas, in implicit feedback L2 learner does not overtly receive any feedback of an error and there would not be any interruption in the flow of the conversation (Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006).

As Ding (2012) states, recasts or target like reformulations create an important part of language input in L2 classrooms, while prompts make learners to state their own target-like output (Rassaei, 2013). However, it showed that these two CF strategies do various functions in the classroom; through keeping the learners' focus on meaning, recasts give the opportunity to the teacher to handle the linguistic form (Doughty & Williams, 1998). It is asserted that recasts draw the learners' attention to L2 forms and let them be aware of the mismatches between their interlanguage and L2 forms in the input that they will rebuild their interlanguage toward the acquisition of target language forms (Doughty, 2001).

However, it should be mentioned that in the interpretation of these findings as Ammar and Spada (2006) stated in their study, the efficacy of recasts and other CF techniques relies on so several factors including proficiency level, age group, grammatical feature and teaching or learning context.

## CONCLUSION

Regarding the findings of the study, teachers and instructors can make correct decisions about types of approach (forms versus form), classroom error correction strategy (recasts, prompts and explicit feedback) and types of grammatical items in the process of L2 learning. As Han (2002) states, there is a significant and determining aspect for CF that is teachers' awareness of learning process not the learners' response to correction. Deciding what type of feedback is appropriate for learning issues, it is so important that the teachers have the knowledge of teaching strategies so that they can choose the one that matches the targeted problem and ongoing dynamics of communicative activities (p.25). Accordingly, teachers should provide opportunity to the students to master form in communication, authentic or simulation tasks and real life situation. Even though the research evidence supports the beneficial effect of using prompts as CF strategy, more research with different participants, in different settings, using different treatments, using different feedback strategy and using different linguistic features like pronunciation, vocabulary, notion, function as a focus of the study is needed before we can arrive to any conclusion about whether certain CF techniques are more effective than others



As the three groups were checked with regard to their knowledge and scores based on Oxford Placement Test (OPT), which was used to homogenize the students, the final absence of any significant difference between their mean scores on the achievement pre-tests could be contributed to the equivalence of the effects of the types of instruction they received.

From what has been discussed above, it is obvious that recasts and prompts make two important classifications of corrective feedback. Through comparison of the effects of these two feedback forms may shed light on theoretical issues such as (i) the role of input and output in L2 learning, and (ii) the cognitive roles that recasts and prompts play in L2 learning. It may also provide teachers in L2 classrooms with pedagogical advice to increase the impact of error correction, all of which have made research on recasts and prompts an issue of intensive investigation.

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