IS UPTAKE A VALID MEASURE OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RECASTS?:

The Role of Uptake in L2 Korean Relative Clauses Development
Recasts can be defined as “more targetlike versions of learners’ nontargetlike utterances,” according to Goo and Mackey (2013), among various definitions of recasts offered (Long, 1996, 2006; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Sheen, 2006, Loewen & Philp, 2006).
Any type of learners’ immediate response to feedback, ranging from simple acknowledgement of the feedback (such as “Yeah”) to learners’ repetition of feedback, reformulating their original utterance(s) (Egi, 2010).
BENEFICIAL ROLE OF RECASTS

- Recasts do not interrupt the communication flow by isolating the linguistic feature out of context, and thus they can promote form-function mapping more effectively.

- Recasts convey both positive and negative evidence, which is necessary for SLA (Iwashita, 2003; Leeman, 2003).

- Recasts are provided contingent upon the learner's erroneous utterances, and thus the correct forms are juxtaposed with the incorrect forms. Such contingency and juxtaposition of recasts can make the linguistic target more salient and thus promote learners’ noticing of the gap between their interlanguage and target language (Schmidt, 1990).
Empirical evidences have accumulated demonstrating the facilitative role of recasts across different settings and contexts (i.e., SL/FL contexts, laboratory/classroom, FTF/CMC) (Goo & Mackey, 2013).

Medium to large effects sizes have been reported in recent meta-analysis studies, confirming the beneficial role of recasts in SLA (Mackey & Goo, 2007; Li, 2010; Lyster & Saito, 2010).

However, the efficiency of recasts have been often discounted due to relatively lower rates of uptake and repairs following recasts, in comparison to other feedback types (e.g., explicit correction or prompts) (Ellis, et al., 2006; Havranek, 2002; Havranek & Cesnik, 2001; Lyster, 1998b, 2004; Lyster & Ranta, 2013).
CATEGORIZATION OF UPTAKE

- Repair vs. Needs-Repair (Lyster & Ranta, 1997)
- Acknowledge, Repair, & Needs Repair (Ellis et al., 2001)
- Successful Uptake vs. Unsuccessful Uptake (Ellis et al., 2001)
- Modified Output vs. Unmodified Output (Egi, 2010; Adams, Nuevo, & Egi., 2011)
Researchers have widely assumed that uptake promotes noticing and thus is facilitative to acquisition (Ellis et al., 2001).


- Pushed output promotes learners’ noticing of the gap between their interlanguage and the target language.
- Output provides learners the opportunity to try out new language forms (i.e., hypothesis testing).
- Using the language forces learners to move from semantic processing to syntactic processing, as they are engaged in producing the language, as opposed to merely comprehending the language.

Uptake was also suggested to help learners automatize the linguistic item and therefore make the retrieval of the item faster (Gass, 2003; Lyster & Ranta, 1997).
A number of studies that investigated the relationship between uptake and L2D (Adams, Nuevo, & Egi, 2011; Lowen, 2005; McDonough, 2004; 2005; Nassaji, 2013; Shekary & Tahririan, 2006) have shown that it is not the occurrence of uptake but the quality of uptake (i.e., repair) that matters.

Only successful uptake (i.e., repair) was a strong predictor of correct test scores whereas uptake in general was not. (Loewen, 2005; Shekary & Tahririan, 2006)

Only modified output significantly predicted L2 development of English question forms whereas various types of negative feedback conditions did not. (McDonough, 2005)
EMPIRICAL STUDIES: UPTAKE & NOTICING

- Mackey, Gass, & McDonough (2000)

  When learners produced modified output, they tended to perceive the linguistic target of the feedback more accurately than when they did not.

- Egi (2010)

  Uptake was related to learners’ noticing of recasts as corrective feedback whereas successful repair was associated with learners’ noticing of both the feedback and the gap.

  The learners perceived feedback and the gap in the same way, regardless of the well-formedness of the modified output, indicating that the attempt to reformulate the original utterance was more strongly related to noticing than the successfulness of the repair.


  “Partial modified output was the greatest predictor of accurate noticing of feedback.”
Thus, uptake has been widely accepted as an indicator of learners’ noticing of feedback and the subsequent L2 development and also often adopted as a measure of the relative effectiveness of corrective feedback (Chaudron, 1977; Egi, 2010; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Lyster, 1998a, 1998b; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Nassaji, 2007; 2011, Panova & Lyster, 2002; Sheen, 2004, 2006).

Although uptake has been shown to be predictive of learner’s noticing of feedback and L2 development, it does not necessarily mean that the absence of uptake should be interpreted as a sign of learners’ failure to notice the feedback or as an indication of no learning has taken place.

This is particularly true when it comes to recasts that are more implicit in nature and thus do not inherently require learners to respond.
Claims Against Uptake as a Measure of the Effectiveness of Recasts

- Uptakes are largely dependent upon the provision of opportunities to respond following the feedback (Braidi, 2002; Oliver, 1995; Oliver & Mackey, 2003).

- Uptake itself does not constitute learning or acquisition (Lyster, 2007). Likewise, the absence of uptake should not be interpreted as evidence of no learning or noticing of feedback.

- Substantial learning took place following recasts despite the absence of learner responses (Ayoun, 2001; Leeman, 2003; Mackey & Philp, 1998)

- Thus, uptake should be considered as facilitative of learning (Ellis et al., 2001), but not as a necessary condition for learning.
A learner’s immediate repetition of recasts might not indicate any learning but rather could be simple mimicking without true understanding of the purpose of the recast (Gass, 2003; Hawkins, 1985; Long, 2007).

The effects of recasts might be delayed rather than immediately manifested (Mackey, 1999; Mackey & Philp, 2003; Muranoi, 2000).

Greater effects of recasts were found in the delayed posttest than the immediate ones (Mackey, 1999; Mackey & Philp, 2003).

Learner responses could be delayed beyond the next turn following the recasts (i.e., primed production) (Mackey & McDonough, 2006).
PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Although tremendous attention has been paid and a considerable number of studies have been conducted on the effects of feedback and uptake in SLA, only handful of studies have investigated this issue on L2 Korean acquisition. (Jang, Jung, Kim, & Lee, 2014)

Thus, the current study aims to shed more light on this, particularly on the relationship between recasts and uptake, by investigating whether producing uptake, particularly in the form of repair of recasts, is more beneficial for L2 development of Korean relative clauses (RCs).
In order to examine the relative effects of producing uptake and repair, two types of recasts differing in mode (i.e., declarative vs. interrogative recasts) were employed in this study.

Since interrogative recasts can be interpreted as confirmation checks rather than corrective feedback, the interrogative ones have been considered to be more ambiguous and thus less explicit than the declarative ones (Loewen & Philp, 2006; Lyster, 1998b; Oliver, 1995).

It was expected from the recast literature that declarative recasts would result in greater amount of repairs than interrogative recasts, due to their relative explicitness. (Sheen, 2006; Lowen & Philp, 2006)
OPERATIONALIZATION: RECASTS

**LRN:** 동그라미 남자 책을 읽는 걸 읽어요.

*Tongkulami namca chayk-ul ilk-nun kel ilk-eyo.*

The circle, the thing which the man reads the book... read.'

**NS:** 남자가 읽는 책에 요.

*Namca-ka ilk-nun chayk-ey (tongkulami iss-e)yo.*

The circle is on the book the man reads.'

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Declarative Recast
OPERATIONALIZATION: RECASTS

LRN: 동그라미 남자 책을 읽는 걸 읽어요.
   Tongkulami namca chayk-ul ilk-nun kel ilk-eyo.
   circle the man book-ACC read-REL.PRES COMP-ACC read-POL-DEC
   ‘The circle, the thing which the man reads the book… read.’

NS: 남자가 읽는 책에 요?
   Namca-ka ilk-nun chayk-ey (tongkulami iss-e)yo.
   man-NOM read-REL.PRES book-at circle be-POL-INT
   ‘Is the circle on the book the man reads?’
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Being more explicit in nature, do declarative recasts induce greater uptake and repair rates following the recasts than interrogative one in task-based dyadic interactions between the learners and a native interlocutor?

2. If so, does it lead to greater subsequent L2 development of the Korean RCs than interrogative recasts?
Korean relative clauses (RCs) were shown to develop in the order of subject RCs, direct object RCs, and obliques RCs in both L1 and L2 acquisition studies (Cho, 1999; Kim, 1987; Lee, 1991 for L1 and Jeon & Kim, 2007; O’Grady, Lee, & Choo, 2003; O’Grady, Yamashita, Lee, Choo, & Cho, 2000 for L2).

Korean direct object RCs were chosen as the target structure for this study.
PARTICIPANTS

- 63 adult KSL & KFL learners from beginning-high to intermediate level & a female Korean NS
- From various L1 backgrounds
  - English (47.6%), Chinese (19.0%), Japanese (17.5%), Korean (9.5%), Cantonese (4.8%), Sinhalese (1.6%)
- Assigned into three groups through stratified random sampling
  - Korean language proficiency level (i.e. institutional level)
  - Backgrounds (i.e. L1 and heritage vs. non-heritage)
  - Developmental readiness for Korean RCs (based on the pretest scores)
PROCEDURE

Week 1
- Pretest (40-50 min.)
- Treatment 1 (30 min.)

Week 2
- Treatment 2 (30 min.)
- Immediate Posttest (40-50 min.)

Week 3
- Delayed Posttest (40-50 min.)

- Only the learners in the treatment group received recasts (either DEC or INT recasts), following their erroneous utterance of Korean DO RCs.

- In order to provide the learners with the opportunity to respond, a short pause was always given to the learners immediately after a recast (Oliver, 1995).
INSTRUMENTS

- Pretest/Posttest Measures (3 versions)
  - Oral Production Task (OPT)
  - Sentence Combination Task (SCT)
  - Grammaticality Judgment Test (GJT)

- Treatment Tasks (2 versions)
  - Draw Circle Task (DCT)
  - Find Circle Task (FCT)
The interaction data were transcribed and analyzed using CHILDES (MacWhinney, 2000).

A second rater separately coded 25% of the randomly selected data, and there was 92.5% of agreement between the two raters.

For the parts where discrepancy arose between the two raters, discussion was made until consensus reached.
Analysis of Co-Variance (ANCOVA) was performed to investigate the relationships between recasts conditions and various types of learner uptake, taking the frequency of recasts as a covariance considering that the production of uptake was contingent upon the providence of recasts.

Before analyzing the accuracy test scores, one-way ANOVA was run on the pretest scores to ensure that the three groups were comparable.

In order to examine the differences among the three groups with regard to their accuracy test scores, a split-plot ANOVA was employed taking group as between-subject variable and time as within-subject variable.

An alpha level of $p < .05$ was set for all the analysis conducted.
Slightly greater number of INT recasts ($k = 298, M = 16.56$) were provided than DEC recasts ($k = 285, M = 14.25$).

Uptake rate was slightly higher in case of DEC (86.7%) than INT recasts (80.5%).

ANCOVA revealed no significant difference between INT and DEC group in terms of uptake rates ($F (1, 35) = .011, p = .916$).
The INT group produced greater number of acknowledge (59.4%) than repetition (21.1%), whereas similar proportions of acknowledge (45.6%) and repetition (41.1%) were produced in the DEC group.

ANOVA confirmed the differences between the two groups with respect to simple acknowledge ($F(1, 35) = 5.243, p = .028$) and repetition ($F(1, 35) = 4.153, p = .049$) were statistically significant.
Considerably greater number of repair (51.3%) was produced in the DEC group than the INT group, and the differences between the two groups were found to be statistically significant as well ($F(1, 35) = 5.467$, $p = .025$).
Overall, the largest score gains were manifested in the INT, followed by the DEC.

Significant main effects of time \((F (2, 120) = 57.932, p = .000)\) and significant interaction effects between time and group \((F (4, 120) = 2.590, p = .040)\) were obtained. But no main effects for group \((F (2, 60) = .353, p = .704)\) was found.
With significant score increases found in all three groups, effect sizes were calculated for the total scores to examine the overall magnitude of the effects.

Large effect sizes were obtained from both of the recasts groups in the IPT (INT = .74, DEC = .82),

Further increase was observed by the INT (d = 1.05) in the DPT whereas the DEC group remained the same (d = .80).

Only small to medium effect sizes were obtained in the CNT (IPT = .35, DPT = .60).
DISCUSSION: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Whereas the INT group responded with simple acknowledgement significantly more frequently following the recasts, significantly greater numbers of repetition and repair were produced from the DEC group.

When the relative effects of DEC and INT recasts on L2 development of the Korean RCs were examined, significant score increases were observed in both of the recasts groups, along with the control group.

However, larger effect sizes were obtained from both of the recast groups, especially from the INT group, and only small to medium effect sizes were obtained from the control group.
The finding suggest that although producing repair is beneficial for Korean L2 development (as shown in the significant score increase in the DEC group), not producing repair following recasts should not be interpreted as evidence of no learning or noticing of recasts as corrective feedback. Despite statistically lower repair rates, overall the largest effect size was obtained from the INT group.

Hence, it would be more appropriate to regard uptake (more specifically repair) as facilitative of learning, but not as a necessary condition for learning (Ellis et al., 2001).
In addition, although the effects of explicit (declarative) recasts and repair were rather immediately manifested, the effects of implicit (interrogative) recasts and uptake emerged gradually, resulting in greater effect sizes in the DPT than in the IPT.

The findings confirm that the effects of recasts can be delayed rather than immediately manifested (Mackey, 1999; Mackey & Philp, 2003; Muranoi, 2000). Therefore, the efficacy of recasts should not be discounted due to lack of immediate uptake (particularly in the form of repair).
As all of the participants were developmentally ready to acquire the target structure, significant score increases obtained in all three groups, making the interpretation of the current study somewhat difficult.

This study employed only a short-term delayed posttest, which was administered one week after the IPT. Lacking a long-term DPT, this study has failed to clearly demonstrate to what extent the effects of different types of recasts and uptake would be sustained.

Thus, in future study, it would be advisory to select the linguistic target for which the developmental readiness can be more properly controlled, to investigate direct relationships between uptake and score increases by comparing individual data, and employing a long-term DPT to capture the whole picture of recasts effects.
LIMITATIONS & CONCLUSION

In conclusion, although presence of uptake can be indicative of learner’s noticing of recasts as feedback and possibly predictive of subsequent L2 learning, it seems that uptake cannot be a valid measure of the effectiveness of corrective feedback, particularly in the case of recasts, unlike other feedback types, which are implicit in nature and do not require any responses from the learners.
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