A Study of L2 Learners' Perceptions of Recasts and Uptake in Conversational Interaction

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1. INTRODUCTION

The current teaching guidelines (*gakushushidouyoryo*) for senior high schools state that the overall objective of teaching English is to develop students' communication abilities, and in order to improve these abilities, sufficient opportunities should be given to students so that they can be exposed to and use the target language, i.e., English in communicating in classrooms. Also, the vital role of grammar instruction is emphasized as a means to support communication through effective linkage with language activities (MEXT, 2009). Thus, it is necessary for teachers to provide students with sufficient language activities where they can use the form they learn while communicating in classroom. However, a question which most widely arises while observing communicative classrooms concerns error correction and how teachers could provide corrective feedback (hereafter CF) to help improve learners' accuracy as well as fluency in oral production. In more communicative and content-based classroom settings, among the various CF types, recasts have attracted considerable attention because of their characteristic of addressing problematic items implicitly without risking loss of face or interrupting the flow of communication. However, while many studies support the benefits of recasts (e.g., Doughty & Varela, 1998; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Leeman, 2003, 2007; Ohta, 2000; Sheen, 2004; Russell & Spada, 2006; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Mackey & Goo, 2007), others question their corrective effect (e.g., Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Lyster, 1998; Havranek, 1999; Vásquez & Harvey, 2010). Although the results vary according to a variety of factors[1] focused on in different studies, the major concerns are that recasts are less likely to lead to learner uptake than other types of feedback and that it is difficult for learners to perceive recasts as CF because of their ambiguous characteristics (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Besides, as Lyster and Saito (2010) point out that "theoretical and methodological constructs of CF studies are enormously diverse" (p. 295), further exploration is required to measure the effectiveness of CF in various interactional contexts. The present study aims to explore Japanese EFL university students' uptake, i.e., the extent to which they respond to the recasts provided by the

interlocutor, and whether or not they perceive the recasts as CF. The paper begins with describing various types of oral CF, followed by examining the issues related to recasts; definitions, relation with learner perception, uptake, repair and noticing. A case study investigating the uptake and perceptions of the two students is conducted by employing multiple methods; both video and audio recordings of the conversations, stimulated recall while viewing videos, and interpreting the transcribed data. Lastly, it tries to offer some implications for further research and pedagogical value of recasts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 1 A Role of Oral Corrective Feedback and Different CF Types

As Leeman (2007) points out, most teachers believe that error correction is beneficial for L2 development. In fact, "traditional pedagogical practice has been characterized by the assumption that learners require feedback on error in order to make progress in their ability to use L2 in more target-like ways" (Nicholas, Lightbown, & Spada, 2001, p. 720). Under the Audiolingual Method, based on behaviorism, error has been viewed as phenomena to be avoided. However, communicative approaches (e. g., Content-Based Instruction and Task-Based Instruction) have led us to see errors as "evidence of learners' progress, in the sense that they show that learners are making creative attempts to use language beyond what they have been taught" (ibid., p. 720). Accordingly, language teachers may have come to believe that, given sufficient opportunities to use the language interactively, learners will eventually reach high levels without direct correction of errors or explicit teaching of the target language grammar. On the other hand, it is often pointed out that the absence of attention to forms and errors may be a serious problem in communicative classrooms. Brown (2007) makes the point that communicative approaches "now tend to advocate an optimal balance between attention to form (and errors) and attention to meaning" (p. 273). Also, Lightbown and Spada (2006) argue that leaving errors untreated and using incorrect forms repeatedly may lead to fossilization. Assuming that providing feedback is beneficial for L2 development, it is one of language teachers' goals "to help our learners move along the interlanguage (hereafter IL) continuum," and to "provide them with the feedback they need to modify their hypotheses about the functions and linguistic forms they use" (Allwright & Bailey, 1991, p. 99). Then, the issues include when and how teachers should correct which errors, and the extent to which the ways teachers use to correct errors affect L2 development. Especially, teachers tend to face a dilemma: "If [they] do not correct errors, opportunities for students to make links between form and function are reduced; if [they] do correct errors, they risk interrupting the flow of communication" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 41) and they risk appearing to be lacking in affective support.

In order to present the types and distribution of CF and their relationship to learner uptake, Lyster et al. (1997) classified six types of feedback[2] by analyzing the data collected from primary-level immersion classrooms conducted by four teachers. These types include explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation and repetition. Later, Ranta and Lyster (2007) reclassified them into two kinds: *reformulations* (recasts and explicit correction) and *prompts* (elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, clarification requests and teacher repetition). They distinguish these two types according to their effect on learners' self-repair; while the former moves present correct forms without providing L2 learners with opportunities to correct themselves, the latter moves push them to self-repair. In their earlier studies (e.g., Lyster et al., 1997), they referred to the latter moves as the "negotiation of form" or "form-focused negotiation" (p. 153). Under this category, recasts, which we focus on in this study, are considered to be a kind of *reformulations* and less likely to lead to self-repair. However, since various researchers have interpreted recasts in different ways in terms of their explicit/ implicitness and their effectiveness on L2 development, we need to elaborate on the issues related to recasts in the next section.

2. 2 Issues Related to Recasts

2. 2. 1 Definitions of Recasts and their Effectiveness on L2 Development

Recasts have attracted a considerable number of studies, and are defined as the teacher's "reformulation of all or part of a learner's immediately preceding utterance in which one or more non-target-like (lexical, grammatical, etc.) items are replaced by the corresponding target-language form(s) and where, throughout the exchange, the focus of both interlocutors is on meaning, not language as an object" (Long, 2007, p. 451). In general, recasts are considered to be a type of implicit negative CF, which do not interrupt the flow of the communication, retaining the central meaning while changing the form of the utterance (Long, 1996). However, there are a number of problems related to a variety of functions and forms of recasts, which makes the defining more difficult and in turn attributes to the varying results in many different studies. Recasts can provide well-formed utterances to replace what learners have said, but it is questionable whether they can certainly inform learners of their problems because of the ambiguous nature of recasts; they can be interpreted as either CF or simply acknowledgements for communicative effectiveness. Also, their implicitness has been questioned. Ellis and Sheen (2006) argue that "recasts cannot be viewed as a purely implicit form of negative feedback" (p. 585) in L2 classrooms where recasts provided by teachers are didactic in nature, often accompanied with overt linguistic signals such as emphatic stress and intonation, and repetition. In this respect, Sheen (2006) makes the point that "emphasis is potentially a variable that will influence the extent to which the corrective force is explicit to learners" (p. 364). Examining the following examples, it is obvious from the learners'

responses that recasts have multiple functions and can be interpreted in different ways. Example 1 indicates that the recast both confirms the meaning of the student's utterance and corrects the form, but it is not clear the student recognizes it as CF. It can be interpreted as "a trigger for elaboration" (Gass, 1998, p. 102). On the contrary, Example 2 shows that the teacher provides a combination technique: first repeats the student's erroneous utterance with emphatic stress on the non-target-like forms, followed by a recast. The student responds to the feedback by repeating the reformulated target-like utterance. Ellis and Sheen (2006) claim that in Example 2 "the illocutionary force of the recast is self-evidently that of correcting the learner, as reflected in the learner's uptake" (p. 579), and the recast is more overt and explicit than that in Example 1.

(1)Example 1 (Loewen & Philp, 2006, p. 538)

    S: to her is good thing (.) to her is good thing

    T: yeah for her it's a good thing (← *recast*)

    S: because she got a lot of money there

(2)Example 2 (Doughty & Varela, 1998, p. 124; *italics* added by the authors)[3]

    José: I think that the worm will go under the soil.

    Teacher: I *think* that the worm *will* go under the soil?　　(← *repetition*)

    José: (no response)

    Teacher: I *thought* that the worm *would* go under the soil. (← *recast*)

    José: I *thought* that the worm *would* go under the soil. (← *uptake*)

In summary, it is more appropriate to consider recasts to be constituting an implicit/ explicit continuum rather than to view them dichotomously (Sheen, 2006, p. 364; Ellis et al., 2006, p. 585; Asari, 2012, p. 1), and in L2 classroom settings, it may be possible that recasts are more likely to arise in form-focused interactions.

In order to minimize the variance of defining recasts, Ellis et al. (ibid.) suggest using a coding system that distinguishes major characteristics of recasts and reclassifying recasts into several different categories (p. 580). Although it is beyond the scope of this study, as practitioners in L2 classrooms, we are interested in noting various types of recasts in our analysis so that we could employ various types of recasts that can be linguistically and pragmatically appropriate in actual classroom interactions. Some of the specific types of recasts detected by previous studies (Lyster, 1998; Mackey and Philp, 1998; Sheen, 2006; Loewen & Philp, 2006) include the length of recasts (short vs. long), linguistic focus (pronunciation vs. grammar), the type of change (substitution vs. addition), the mode (declarative vs. interrogative), the use of reduction (partial recasts) and the number of changes (one vs. multiple).

A number of studies have proved that recasts are a highly frequently used type of feedback in L2 classrooms (e.g., Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Panova & Lyster, 2002). According to Loewen and Philp (2006), the reasons include that recasts are "time-saving, less threatening to student confidence, and less disruptive of the flow of interaction

(p. 537)" and recasts "allow the teacher to maintain control" (ibid.). However, there has been a debate over the effectiveness of recasts on L2 development. As already stated above, a major cause lies in the ambiguous functions of recasts; they can be misinterpreted as alternative positive evidence, non-corrective repetitions, or simply signs of approving learner utterances. In other words, it is possible that a teacher's recasts of non-target-like utterances of learners remain unnoticed, and accordingly, ineffective. Most of the studies which support the effectiveness of recasts were conducted in laboratory settings with a focus on a limited number of linguistic features (Doughty and Varela, 1998; Mackey and Philp, 1998; Leeman, 2003; Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam, 2006; Sheen, 2006). It may be due to "the dyadic nature of the laboratory interactions" (Nicholas et al., 2001, p. 749) and because well controlled variables such as intensity (focus on specific linguistic targets) and consistency may help learners recognize the interlocutors' intention of feedback as corrective (Ellis et al., 2006). Under this condition, recasts are more explicitly provided and as Sheen (2006) points out, such explicit recasts lead to more uptake and/ or repair, which is salient to learners. On the contrary, several studies have proved that recasts are ineffective as CF. For example, Lyster et al. (1997) found that recasts are the least likely to lead to learner uptake, and accordingly less effective than the other CF types. These studies (Lyster, 1998; Panova & Lyster, 2002; Sheen, 2004; Havranek, 1999; Vásquez & Harvey, 2010) were all descriptive ones conducted in classroom contexts and uptake is used as a measure of evaluating the effectiveness of unplanned recasts on L2 development. As uptake and repair are the essential terms in this study, we will discuss the relationship of uptake and repair to L2 development in the next section.

2. 2. 3 Learner Uptake and Perceptions of Recasts

As stated above, a number of studies have investigated recasts and employed uptake as a measure of evaluating the effectiveness of recasts. Uptake was defined by Lyster et al. (1997) as "a student utterance that *immediately* follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance" (p. 48; *italics* added by the authors). Lyster et al. (ibid.), who conducted a series of studies investigating the effectiveness of various CF types by employing uptake as evidence that learners have noticed feedback, classified uptake into 2 subcategories. One is *repair*, which is learners' corrective reformulation of their errors, and the other is *needs-repair*, which does not necessarily involve reformulations but could involve acknowledgements or simple repetition of non-target-like utterances. They categorized the two types of uptake again into four types of other-initiated repair and needs-repair, and the results of their empirical studies indicate that "[i]t is evident that the recast, the most popular feedback technique, is the least likely to lead to uptake of any kind" (p. 54). However, some researchers question the validity of the rate of learner uptake

as a measure of L2 development. Mackey and Philp (1998) investigated the effects of recasts on IL development and the nature of learner responses to recasts by comparing the two groups (modified input vs. modified input with intensive recasts). The results suggest that recasts may be beneficial for short term IL development for more advanced learners but successful uptake (i.e., repair) was not a significant factor in acquisition. Similarly, Nabei (2004) points out, "[A]lthough uptake is an important and observable source for understanding the impact of the feedback (e.g., the feedback is noticed as correction), it is not in itself sufficient evidence to evaluate the effect of the feedback" (p. 17). In other words, it is not wise to conclude that learners do not notice recasts simply due to the lack of uptake. Furthermore, Loewen and Philp (2006), who examined the effectiveness of recasts through meaning-based interaction in adult L2 English classrooms, found that successful uptake was not a significant factor for recasts while prosodic and discoursal cues were found to be predictive of successful uptake. Thus, it is vital to take account of factors influencing the rate and quality of uptake, too. According to Sheen (2004), these factors include the learning contexts (e.g., ESL vs. EFL)[4], the instructional focus (e.g., form- vs. meaning-oriented), the focus of classroom discourse (e.g., didactic vs. communicative), and the interlocutor (NS vs. NNS). Ohta (2000) criticized measuring the effectiveness of recasts based on the presence or absence of an overt oral response, i.e., uptake. She conducted a study investigating learner responses to recasts in Japanese language classrooms, and found, from her empirical data, potential covert uptake should be taken into account to investigate "the inner voice of the learner addressed" (p. 67). Now it is more appropriate to admit that uptake covers a wide range of learner responses, from covertly occurring subvocalized uptake (e.g., whispering to oneself as seen in Ohta, 2000), simple acknowledgments of the feedback (e.g., "OK," "Yes") to reformulation of their errors, i.e., self-repair. (Nicholas et al., 2001; Ellis et al., 2006; Egi, 2010). Ohta (2000) also found that recasts get noticed in classroom interaction even if they do not lead to uptake from the student who originally produced the error, and implies that the immediate occurring responses are not the only evidence of L2 learning. In this respect, Egi (2010) argues that it is necessary to trace whether learners who had received CF actually responded to the feedback or they related different response types to subsequent L2 learning rather than simply analyzing the rate of immediate uptake, citing Long (2007), who stated that immediate uptake is not always indicative of long-term language acquisition. In order to investigate the link between learner responses to CF and L2 development, the internal learning process (i.e., noticing) is a crucial factor, and more careful and deep consideration is required to examine it. Mackey, Gass, and McDonough (2000) found a close relationship between learner uptake and adult L2 learners' perceptions through a dyadic task by employing stimulated recalls. The stimulated recalls revealed that the learners accurately identified the linguistic focus of the feedback and this seems particularly

true for the learner responses where they correctly repaired their errors. Likewise, Egi (2010) employed stimulated recall interviews to uncover the different intentions behind learners' various responses (i.e. uptake, repair, and modified output) to recasts, and gained similar findings to Mackey et al. (2000). Also, the stimulated recalls indicated that in recast episodes where the learners successfully repaired their errors, they were significantly more likely to recognize recasts as CF and notice the gap between IL and L2. This supports Long (1996) and Long and Robinson (1998), who claim that recasts can provide negative evidence and encourage learners to notice the gap between their erroneous output and target forms, which can facilitate L2 acquisition. Egi (ibid.) argues that "noticing the gap may represent a higher mental activity than the simple noticing of L2 exemplars, in that the identification of a gap between two forms involves a deeper linguistic analysis" (p. 6), and calls for further research to explain the relationships between learner responses to CF and noticing the gap, and the association with subsequent L2 development.

To sum up, as Ellis and Sheen (2006) point out, the role of uptake remains uncertain and careful consideration is needed to use it as evidence of L2 development although repair serves as an indicator of learner noticing. We need to take more account of its effects on long-term L2 development rather than examine immediate responses triggered by recasts, and other factors affecting learner responses. Also, as research methodologies and settings seem to influence the varying results, it is important to employ multiple methods in order to elicit learners' inner thoughts rather than measuring their responses from the presence of uptake.

3. THE STUDY

3. 1 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

Following the previous studies concerning learner responses to recasts and uptake, this study specifically attempts to explore Japanese EFL university students' uptake and perceptions after receiving recasts from a teacher. The primary question posed is to what extent Japanese EFL university students perceive recasts during a conversational interaction. To be more specific, the research questions are addressed as follows:

(1) To what extent do Japanese EFL university students demonstrate uptake after receiving recasts?

(2) How do Japanese EFL university students perceive the recasts when they successfully repair their errors compared with when they do not demonstrate repair?

3. 2 Method

3. 2. 1 Participants

The participants in this study were 2 English major students at the university with which the first author is affiliated. Both are in the fourth grade and Student 1 is male and Student 2 is female. They had studied English as a foreign language for more than 9 years in Japanese public schools, and had received formal form-focused instruction. Both had experience of going abroad to study English only in a very limited period of time, i.e., less than a month, and were learners of intermediate proficiency level. They had not been informed of the topic for a conversation with the teacher before the day when the experiment was conducted. A Japanese English teacher was involved in the data collection. She was one of the researchers of this study and had experience teaching in a junior and high school for 14 years and in universities for about a decade. She participated in conversations with the student participants as an interlocutor and a provider of feedback, and also served as an interviewer for the subsequent stimulated recall sessions.

3. 2. 2 Procedure

The students were asked to talk freely with a Japanese English teacher. The conversational interaction with each student was conducted separately. The teacher asked them about what they did on the previous day or over the weekend in order to make the situation as natural as an everyday conversation. The interactions lasted approximately 8 minutes and were both audio- and video-taped. During the conversational interactions, the teacher provided the students with interactional feedback, primarily in the form of recasts, when the students produced non-target-like utterances. The teacher was expected to provide recasts whenever it seemed linguistically and contextually appropriate regardless of types of errors. It means that recasts could be provided in both form-focused and meaning-focused ways. Immediately after the completion of the conversation, each student met individually with an interviewer for the stimulated recall interview. The videotape was played before each student and whenever some recast episodes occurred in sequence, the videotape was stopped by the interviewer, who asked a focused question (e.g., "What were you thinking right after you received feedback?")[5] to elicit their perceptions and thoughts after they received CF. A second researcher was seated nearby taking notes, without saying anything and concentrating on observing the participants' behaviors. These stimulated recall sessions were conducted in Japanese and audio-taped. All the recorded data were transcribed by the second researcher, and then coded by the researchers.

3. 2. 3 Coding of Recast Episodes

In this study, recasts episodes triggered by the students' errors, including the teacher's recasts and the students' uptake, were analyzed based on both the audio-recorded and the transcribed data. Since the goal of this study is to investigate the students' perceptions and uptake of recasts, other types of interactional feedback episodes (e.g. negotiation of meaning, prompts) were not analyzed.

Recasts and recast episodes: Recasts are defined as "a teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 48) and regarded as rather an implicit, meaning-focused type of CF which immediately follows a student's non-target-like utterance without interrupting the flow of communication. The types of errors included morphosyntactic and lexial errors. When more than one type of error was produced in a student turn, only the error addressed in the recast was considered for analysis. Uses of L1 are not errors per se, but when the students used L1 to compensate for their lack of vocabulary and triggered recasts, they were coded as errors.

Uptake: Every response by the student to a recast was coded as uptake. When the student did not respond to a recast in spite of an opportunity for uptake, it was coded as ***no uptake.*** Uptake was classified into subcategories such as repair, needs-repair, needs-repair modified, needs-repair unmodified, and acknowledgement for analysis (Egi, 2010; Asari, 2012).

> ***Repair:*** When the student correctly reformulated an erroneous utterance after receiving a recast, it was coded as repair. It included repeating all or part of the recast.
> ***Needs-Repair:*** When uptake was non-target-like and needed further repair, it was coded as needs-repair.
>
>> ***Needs-Repair Modified:*** When the student modified the erroneous form incorrectly or only partially correctly, it was coded as needs-repair modified (Egi, 2010; Asari, 2012).
>> ***Needs-Repair Unmodified:*** When the student repeated the erroneous utterance without modifications, or expressed difficulty responding the recast linguistically, it was coded needs-repair unmodified (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Egi, 2010; Asari, 2012)
>> ***Needs-Repair Acknowledgement:*** When the student simply acknowledged the recast (e.g. by saying "yes," "no," "I see"), it was coded as needs-repair acknowledgement (Egi, 2010; Asari, 2012).

Following Egi's (2010) study, stimulated recall comments were coded for the students' perceptions of recasts.

Corrective Feedback: When the student recognized having made an error and/ or having received a target-like model of the problematic form, it is coded as focusing on corrective feedback (Egi, 2010).

Linguistic Focus: When the student recognized the target form for which a recast was provided, it was coded linguistic focus (Mackey et al., 2000).

Noticing the Gap: When the student reported both having recognized a recast as corrective and having identified the gap, it was coded as noticing the gap (Egi, 2010).

Affective Factors: When the students reported having had anxiety after receiving a recast, which prevented them from producing utterances, it was coded as affective factors. Also, when they felt having received recasts relaxed them, it was coded as affective factors. Ideally, this should be classified into negative and positive, but it was not necessary because of the absence of negative factors reported.

3. 3 Results

Table 1 indicates the raw frequencies and percentages of the students' errors, the teacher's recasts, and the students' uptake triggered by the recasts, and Figure 1 presents them graphically. We admit the characteristics of recasts (e.g., the length, the emphasis, etc.)[6] are an important variable affecting student uptake and perceptions of recasts, but we are not reporting them in this study because of the small size of the data and the fact that our focus is on exploring the students' inner thoughts behind their responses. To the total of the students' erroneous utterances, the teacher provides recasts at a considerably high rate (75.5%), which is higher than the results reported in the literature (55% in Lyster & Ranta, 1997, and Panova & Lyster, 2002). The total number of uptake followed by the recasts is 40, which indicates that the learners verbally responded, in whatever way, to almost every recast provided except one episode. Examining the subcategories of student uptake, there are only 8 (34.8%) episodes where Student 2 immediately and successfully repaired her problematic utterances while Student 1 did not repair at all. Both of them produced few needs-repair modified and need-repair unmodified responses (7.5% and 12.5% respectively), but conversely used needs-repair acknowledgements a considerable number of times (57.5%); especially Student 1 overused them (70.6%).

Table 1. Frequency of turns with student errors, teacher recasts, and student uptake

Student	Total Student Turns	Student Turns with Errors (% of Total Student Turns)	Teacher Turns with Recasts (% of Total Errors)	Student Turns with Repair (% of Recasts)	Student Turns with Needs-Repair Modified (% of Recasts)	Student Turns with Needs-Repair Unmodified (% of Recasts)	Student Turns with Needs-Repair Acknow-ledge-ment
S1	62	27 (45.3%)	17 (62.9%)	0 (0%)	2 (11.8%)	3 (17.6%)	12 (70.6%)
S2	96	26 (27.1%)	23 (88.5%)	8 (34.8%)	1 (4.3%)	2 (8.7%)	11 (47.8%)
Total	158	53 (33.5%)	40 (75.5%)	8 (20.0%)	3 (7.5%)	5 (12.5%)	23 (57.5%)

Figure 1. Total turns with errors, recasts, uptake, and repair
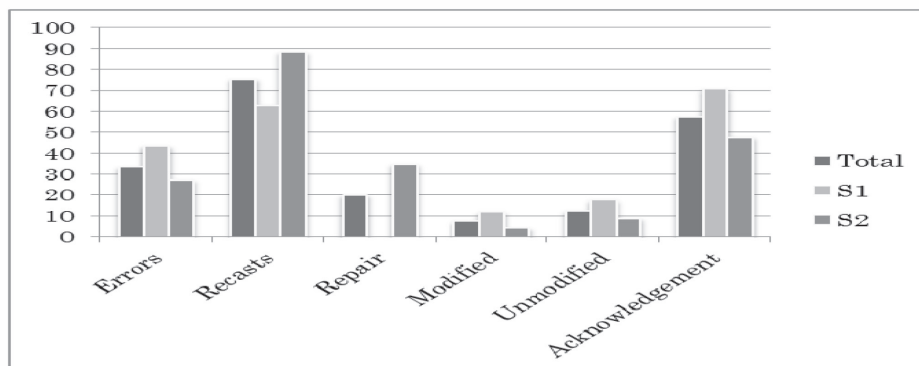
Several examples of recast episodes are presented in Table 2. We admit that the effect of different types of errors is an important variable on which CF focuses and that affect student uptake, but we are not reporting the error types here because it is not the main focus of this study. Table 3 provides the raw frequencies and percentages of recasts in relation to the students' perceptions of the recasts and uptake analyzed by coding based on the stimulated recall comments, and Figure 2 provides a graphic representation of the students' perceptions related to repair and three types of needs-repair. Coded data from the students' recall comments indicate that the students recognized the recasts as CF even when they did not repair the initial problematic utterances (repair 46.67%; needs-repair modified/ unmodified 33.33%; Acknowledgement 38.47%), and reported they had noticed the gap between their erroneous utterances and more target-like ones without producing self-repairs. The students seem to have focused more on linguistic features such as past tense verbs and vocabulary than on meaning. They also provided comments related to affective factors, which is worth noting. Some samples of stimulated recall comments are indicated in Table 4. The stimulated recall sessions were conducted in Japanese but the transcribed data were translated into English by the first author. Initially, meaning focus was not included in coding, but we found some cases and decided to add it for analysis.

Table 2. Coding Scheme: Examples

Recast Episodes	
Uptake Repair	S2: Yes, um::: she, she is, she :::: **sell**,? She **sell**,
	T: Oh, right. Ah, *she sold it.*
	S2: Ah, *sold*, yes.
	S2: Yes. And my :: **tonari**
	T: Ah, *next to you*
	S2: *Next to me*, uh ::, very **chi, children**
	T: I see. *There was a child.*
	S2: *Child, child*. So I **push**,
	T: Ah ::: you, you helped, OK, *you pushed* …
	S2: Yes, *I pushed*.
	T: You pushed her?
	S2: *Her*.
	T: Ah, OK. *You pushed her.*
Needs-Repair Modified	S1: **To standing**, ah,
	T: Ah ::: OK, so you said "***Don't stand up***," or ::
	S1: Uh :: or :: uh :: (1.4) uh :: be quiet.
Needs-Repair Unmodified	S1: Yeah : they uh :: two children uh :: **don't listen our** :
	T: Uh, *they didn't listen to you?*
	S1: Uh ::: listen
Needs-Repair Acknowledgement	S1: They, and : (3.0) **back go**, uh went back uh :: classroom.
	T: Uh :: so you and other teachers : how many teachers?
	S1: Uh ::: one.
	T: Ah, so *you and one teacher ran, RAN after them*.
	S1: Yes.
	S1: **say thing**
	T: So, *you talked, you tried to talk*.
	S1: Yeah.
	S1: Uh :: if they can't, they couldn't uh :: say, do you have (2.6), and ask yes, I do, uh :: I and O san **teach** .. ah **correct**, uh you say do you have red socks?
	T: I see. O : K, so *you and O san supported them*.
	S1: Yes.
	S1: So :: students uh ::: **did they self**,
	T: Ah :: OK, uh :: right, *the students were left alone and they did* ..
	S1: Yes.
	T: *Whatever they liked to do*.
	S1: Yeah.
	S2: **Very hum : beautiful, and, hum :: colorful, so colorful**.
	T: I see. *The dresses were very colorful*.
	S2: Yes.
	S2: Yes, draw pictures. **She like drawing picture**.
	T: I see. *She likes*, OK, *drawing pictures*. I see. And her specialty is drawing pictures?
	S2: Yes.

Note. S1 = Student 1, S2 = Student 2, T = Teacher (Interlocutor); Non-target-like production = bold; linguistic forms targeted by a recast and repair = bold italics; (2.0) = timed pause; : = lengthening

Table 3. Students' Perceptions of Recast Episodes With Uptake, With and Without Repair

	Uptake		Repair		Needs-Repair Modified/ Unmodified		Needs-Repair Acknowledgement		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	Total
Corrective feedback	27	39.19	7	46.67	5	33.33	15	38.47	27
Noticing the gap	14	20.30	4	26.67	5	33.33	6	15.38	15
Linguistic focus	16	23.19	3	20.00	3	20.00	9	23.08	15
Meaning focus	6	8.69	0	0	1	6.67	5	12.82	6
Affective factors	6	8.69	1	6.66	1	6.67	4	10.25	6
Total	69	100	15	100	15	100	39	100	69

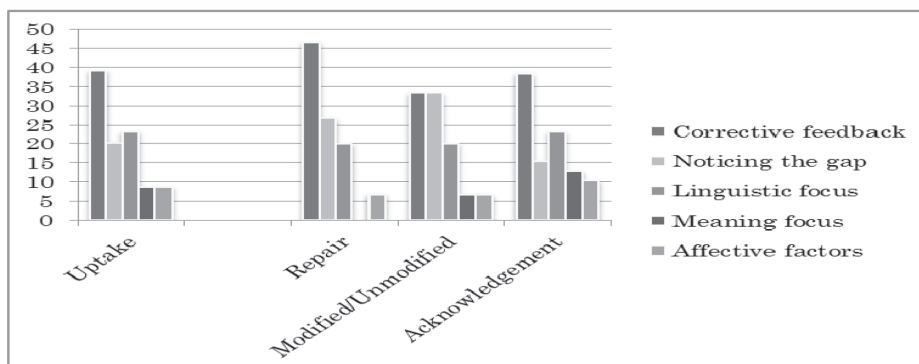**Figure 2.** Students' Perceptions, Repair and Needs-Repair

Table 4. Coding Scheme: Samples of Stimulated Recall Comments

	Stimulated Recall Comments
Corrective Feedback	*I always use "go to .." unconsciously and automatically, and probably this makes it difficult for me to use its past tense "went." I didn't have difficulty uttering "used" and "bought." When I heard the teacher say "bought," I thought I should use it, but I didn't try self-repair because I didn't want to stop the flow of communication. *Initially, I repeated "sell" twice, but actually I was wondering what to say to indicate the past. I didn't recall "sold," and was killing time by repeating "sell." When the teacher said "Oh, she sold it," my feeling of uncertainty was cleared up. I felt I was saved, and thought I would definitely say "sold" next.
Noticing the Gap	*First I was planning what to say in Japanese, and thought of "there." Then I said "There … interesting," but when the teacher said "It was really interesting?" I recognized I should start "It was …." *When the teacher said "She likes drawing pictures?," I realized I had said "She like .." instead of "She likes."
Language Focus	When I said "They had a shopping list," I was clearly conscious of the past tense to express the past event.
Meaning Focus	When the teacher said "corrected," I thought she understood my message, and responded "Yes."
Affective Factors	On the whole, I didn't feel that my errors were corrected, but the teacher was helping me. Probably, I didn't take it negative because we kept communicating. If she had said "You need to use 3rd person –s," I would have felt differently.

4. DISCUSSION

4. 1 The first research question: To what extent do Japanese EFL university students demonstrate uptake after receiving recasts?

The data in Table 1 and Figure 1 indicate that the students did produce uptake following the recasts at a considerably high rate (97.5%). However, this cannot be predictive of the students' recognition of the recasts as CF because any kind of responses (e.g., acknowledgements such as "Yes" or "No") is defined as uptake in this study, and it is not clear why the students responded in these ways without further investigation on their inner thoughts. If uptake is thought to constitute a reaction to the recast that intends to draw attention to a specific problematic aspect of the initial utterance, in Lyster and Ranta's (1997) terms, it can be interpreted differently; the recasts are unlikely to lead to the students' uptake (i.e., repair in this study)(20.0%) and thus ineffective as CF. However, examining the subcategories of uptake, a notable phenomenon is found; both of the students used needs-repair acknowledgements (e.g., mostly "Yes") very frequently after receiving the recasts. One explanation for this is that the ambiguous characteristics of recasts might have allowed them to focus on the meaning in communicating with the teacher rather than paying more attention to the form. They might have overused "Yes" as simply a backchannel that shows they understood what the teacher had said or as a turn taking device for communicative effectiveness. Or they may have recognized the target-like utterance and said "Yes" to show their recognition. Another explanation for their excessive use of "Yes" is related to their working memory and their difficulty in orally producing more target-like utterances immediately after receiving the recasts. This could be further discussed under the second research question.

4. 2 The second research question: How do Japanese EFL university students perceive the recasts when they successfully repair their errors compared with when they do not demonstrate repair?

The stimulated recall reports revealed that the students had recognized the recasts as CF more frequently than it can be judged from their immediate responses following the recasts. Especially, the recasts were more frequently perceived as correction when followed by the students' self-repair (46.67%), which is in accord with the result of Egi's study (2010, 52.43%) but considerably differs from that of Lyster and Ranta (1997, 18%), Panova and Lyster (2002, 13%). The recall reports indicate that Student 2 confirmed that she had recognized all the recasts that triggered her 8 repairs as CF and denied the question that her successful uptake might have been simple repetitions or parroting. She repeatedly said that she was helped by the teacher's recasts during the interaction. This finding supports the claim that learner uptake with repair may be a sign of recognizing the corrective function of recasts (e.g., Mackey et al., 2000; Egi,

2010).

Even in the cases of learner uptake without repair, the students' oral reports indicate that they recognized the corrective force of the recasts provided (needs-repair modified/ unmodified 33.33%; acknowledgement, 38.47%). Especially, it is noteworthy to discuss their excessive use of "Yes" as their immediate responses for various purposes. 38.47 % (15 cases) of the acknowledgements were produced as a sign of understanding their initial problematic utterances after receiving the recasts. For example, Student 1, who overused "Yes," said that he kept paying attention to the past tense and pronunciation of "ran," and noticed the teacher's corrective recasts, but he simply repeated "Yes" because he was not ready to utter it with confidence. Acknowledgement even indicates their noticing the gap (6 cases; 15.38%) along with other needs-repair types. Some recall comments prove their internal learning processes, i.e., noticing (as seen in the samples in Table 4). In this respect, as Loewen (2005) argues, it was not merely the production of uptake that was important but also the quality of uptake, and the findings of this study concur with the results in Mackey et al. (1998), Nabei (2004), Loewen et al. (2006), and Ohta (2000).

Although the students in this study focused more on linguistic features, some interesting comments were found regarding meaning. Student 1 reported that his focus on the message in communication discouraged him from recognizing the recast to his erroneous form of "attend" to express a past event. At the beginning of the conversation, he learned the appropriate use of the word "attend" after receiving the recast and now he got a chance to use it. In this context, he responded "Yes, lunch with …" for more elaboration rather than reformulating the form. Another important finding is that even if the students did not demonstrate uptake with repair immediately after receiving the recasts, they might have incorporated the focused form in their learning processes. The example below shows that Student 1 came to monitor his own utterances after repeatedly receiving the recasts focusing on the past tense. He said that when he used filler such as "uh," he was planning how to speak in order to use accurate forms.

(1) S59: So: **uh::** students, each other stu:dent **uh:: had** a shopping list,

In fact, Leeman (2000) argues that recasts may promote L2 development by enhancing the salience of the target form rather than by marking their problematic productions. In this example, too, the recast seemed to raise the student's consciousness of accuracy of form and activate his self-monitoring function. Moreover, the students seemed to benefit from the recasts and change their output not immediately after receiving the recasts. For instance, Student 1 sometimes corrected his own utterances immediately after making mistakes as illustrated in examples (2) ~ (4).

(2) S74-75: Uh:: if they **can't**, they **couldn't** uh: say, do you have, and ask yes I do, uh:: I and Okabe-san tea ah correct, uh you say do you have [red socks,?]

(3) S98: Five-one, yes. And uh:: today uh:: two children uh:: **catch** a co um, **caught** a

cold,

(4) S100: Uh: so teacher Sho-sensei is very bs, **was** very busy,

In the stimulated recall session, he said he learned to use some accurate forms and appropriate words which were provided in the form of recasts by the teacher in the earlier part of the interaction. Furthermore, we observed his repeatedly occurring errors in past tense were gradually decreasing as he tried to use the form more accurately. As Ellis, et al. (2006) and Muranoi (2000) claim, the internalization of L2 information provided in feedback may take some time and may not be fully measured by the learners' immediate reactions to the feedback. Furthermore, the stimulated recalls (e.g., the sample coded as an affective factor, seen in Table 4) revealed that the students felt little anxiety when the recasts were provided. It may be because recasts are not likely to interrupt the flow of communication and as the students orally reported, some recasts can be interpreted as the teacher's acceptance of the student's message. Lastly, the fact that the students in this study paid considerable attention to specific forms may be affected by a variety of factors such as their age (adolescents), learning experience (familiar with form-focused instruction), motivation (both are English majors), an experimental setting and the relationship with the interlocutor (dyad with a familiar teacher). As Ellis et al. (2006) point out, for future research, more consideration is required for the social and instructional conditions in which recasts occur.

5. CONCLUSION

This study attempted to explore two Japanese university EFL students' uptake and perceptions of recasts. The major findings include the following points. First, the effectiveness of recasts cannot be measured simply from the learners' immediate verbal responses, i.e., uptake, and it is necessary to classify both recasts and uptake into subcategories for deeper investigation on the relationship between the effectiveness of CF and L2 development. Second, the stimulated recall reports revealed CF in the form of recasts has the potential to facilitate learner noticing in focus on form instruction, i.e., focusing of attention on specific linguistic form in the context of communication.

It is apparent that several improvements in the method are required for further research, but at the same time, adjustments can have empirical and pedagogical implications. First, the sample size was too small, and subsequent studies with the larger number participants are called for. Also, longitudinal studies are needed to explore the impact of recasts on learners' language development over time. Second, different types of recasts were not analyzed nor were various types of errors in this study. We agree with Lyster (1998) when he suggests that teachers "consider

the whole range of techniques they have at their disposal rather than relying so extensively on recasts" (p. 56), and call for more future studies to investigate the effects of these different types not only for theoretical frameworks but also for pedagogical purposes in L2 classrooms. In addition, research settings are reported to affect the results. As Doughty (1994) and Sheen (2004) point out, in foreign language classrooms in which students' and teachers' focus is more consistently on the language may be able to benefit from recasts, and as Ohta (2000) claims, other learners may be able to benefit from recasts triggered by one single learner. Moreover, Ellis et al. (2006) argue that "learner uptake of feedback is also more likely in a teacher-fronted lesson than in a pair work situation consisted of confirmation requests for which the appropriate response was simply yes or no" (p. 589). Thus, more classroom-based studies are required to generalize the effectiveness recasts on L2 development.

Notes

1. A variety of factors affecting the varying results include the type of feedback, the amount of feedback, the mode of feedback, the source of feedback, learner proficiency level, learner attitudes towards feedback, learner aptitude, motivation and anxiety, learner noticing and interpretation of feedback, and learner age. For more details, see Russell and Spada (2006).

2. The effectiveness of these six types of CF has been investigated by many researchers, but it is beyond the scope of this study. For well-balanced summaries, see Russell and Spada (2006), Mackey and Goo (2007), and Lyster and Saito (2010).

3. Doughty and Varela (1998) call this corrective strategy "corrective recasting" to mean slightly more explicit than recasts.

4. Some researchers who have investigated recasts in FL contexts suggest that FL learners tend to respond to teachers' recasts. For example, Doughty (1994) found that the college FL students responded to recasts most frequently among all the CF types provided by a teacher. Also, Sheen (2004), who studied Korean adult EFL learners' responses to teachers' recasts, found that 82% of recasts occurred in the study received learner uptake and as much as 70% of recasts followed by uptake were correctly repaired. Moreover, Ohta's (2000) study on adult FL learners of Japanese showed learners' frequent responses to teachers' recasts as a whole class. In these FL studies, the learners "may have been able to make use of the information contained in the recast at least in part because they were in language-focused as opposed to content-based instructional environments" (Nicholas, Lightbown, & Spada, 2001, p. 743). Unlike more communicative and content-based classroom settings (e.g., ES and immersion contexts), FL contexts may allow both learners and teachers to focus more consistently on the language (as well as meaning).

Thus, Japanese EFL environment in which both communication and language forms are taken more seriously may also be able to benefit from recasts as CF.

5. The interviewer tried to listen rather passively to the students' oral reports in order to minimize the potential influence of her perspectives on their reports, but Egi's (2010) comment was of great help to redesign the stimulated recall interview so that we could elicit student "introspection about a particular conversation turn" (p. 17).

6. For more details, see Lyster (1998), Sheen (2006), Loewen and Philp (2006), and Asari (2012).

Acknowledgment

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