

ISSN 0119-5107



**Philippine Normal University
CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION
Manila**



RESEARCH SERIES

No. 118

January 16-31, 2010

NOTICING LANGUAGE FEATURES THROUGH LINGUISTIC CUES

ROSARITO TATEL-SUATENGCO

Research Coordinator

College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature

NOTICING LANGUAGE FEATURES THROUGH LINGUISTIC CUES*

Rosarito Tatel-Suatengco

Research Coordinator

College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature

INTRODUCTION

How does a learner acquire a second language? This question is a subject of heated academic discussions since the phenomena of second language acquisition (SLA) draw interests from scholars and academicians alike. One major construct that gained ground in SLA literature is noticing (Schmidt, 1990; Sharwood-Smith, 1981; Ellis, 1999; Krashen, 1998; and Swain, 1995).

The argument on the importance of “noticing” is based on Noticing Hypothesis postulated by Schmidt (1990). The hypothesis claims that noticing is a “necessary” and a “significant” condition that converts input into intake for learning.

Noticing hypothesis states that what the learners notice in input is what becomes intake for learning. It further states that a) the linguistic input becomes intake if it is noticed by a learner whether deliberately or purely unintentionally, and b) noticing is necessary condition for second language (L2) acquisition (Schmidt, 1995).

*This paper was presented during the 7th PALT International Conference in December 2007 at the Manila Hotel, Philippines.

This theory is based on Schmidt's own diary study of the acquisition of 21 verbal constructions in Portuguese which found that the learner processed consciously noticed features on a level leading to eventual production. By consciously "noticing the gap," the learners were able to reflect on what is noticed. Rutherford (1987) referred to this as consciousness raising to draw the learners' attention to the formal properties of language.

Other language specialists share Schmidt's views on noticing in SLA. They assert that noticing is the first stage of language acquisition (Gass, 1988), an important component of successful language learning (Lynch, 2001) and an initial step in language processing (Sharwood-Smith, 1981; Rutherford, 1987; and McLaughlin, 1990).

On applying noticing in processing linguistic features, Truscott (1988) believes that noticing is essential for the acquisition of metalinguistic knowledge, complete gap-fills, manipulate sentences and stage grammar rules.

Another theory where noticing is recognized as an important condition to effect acquisition is Output Hypothesis postulated by Merrill Swain (1995). This theory complements Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis since it also recognizes the significance of noticing in drawing a learner's attention to a linguistic feature. It postulates that production facilitates noticing of problems in the target language and of relevant features in the input. This noticing may in turn stimulate the processes of language acquisition (Swain, 1985; Woodfield, 1998; Izumi and Bigelow, 2000).

One way to help learners notice and pay attention to language features is by applying a corrective feedback in their outputs. Research suggests that corrective feedback may come in various forms. Studies show that to make language features salient and noticed, an input enhancement and prompts, among

others, could be employed (Gass, 1998; Ellis, 1998; Lyster and Ranta, 1997).

Although early studies on corrective feedback in L2 acquisition may not have promoted the use of corrective feedback¹, recent results of studies on corrective feedback (Oliver, 2000) showed that feedback might contribute to noticing and acquisition.²

However, there were still questions on corrective feedback. The first dealt with how feedback could help learners notice the gap, the second with the extent the degree of explicitness could influence its effectiveness (Han, 2002), the third with the extent to which corrective feedback could prompt learners to recognize the gap between their incorrect forms and the target language (TL) forms and finally, with the kind of corrective feedback that better facilitates learners' noticing of the difference between their language and the TL.

Considering those issues, this study looked into how linguistic cues could lead learners to notice salient language features and eventual acquisition of those features as opposed to input enhancement in the form of underlining. Specific questions that guided the investigation are the following:

1. What errors were produced by the Experiment Group (EG) and by the Control Group (CG)?

¹ The study of Chun et al. (1982) that investigated the adult native speaker-nonnative speaker (NS-NNS) non-instructional conversations found out that only 8.9% of NNS erroneous utterances were responded to with some form of corrective feedback, thereby suggesting that corrective feedback rarely occurred.

² Oliver's (2000) study on corrective feedback showed that frequently and consistently provided feedback was incorporated into the learners' subsequent output. This might provide supportive evidence that corrective feedback does not only exist but it is also used by the learners in their subsequent interlanguage production.

-
2. To what extent did L2 learners perform noticing to recognize problematic language features using linguistic cues and input enhancement?
 3. Did the group that was provided with linguistic cues in the output more ably perform appropriate modifications on language features than the group that received input enhancement?
 4. Were the modified outputs for Composition Tasks 1 and 2 of the Experimental Group more comprehensible than the modified outputs of the Control Group?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized the pre-experimental design with a control group and an experimental group. This may also be called Static-Group Comparison. There was no pretest. The posttests were given twice in a form of a modified output. The first posttest for Composition Task No. 1 was focused on the lexical items while the second posttest for Composition Task No. 2 was focused on phrasal and clausal items. There was no randomization of samples. The treatment received by the experimental group was the linguistic cues while the treatment for the control group was underlining. Underlining is a traditional treatment that teachers use in providing a corrective feedback to students' errors.

Participants

The participants were 30 sophomore college students (aged 16-19) from two different sections taking English 3 (Academic Writing) at Philippine Normal University in the first

semester of SY 2007-2008. Based on the results of the entrance examination given by the Admissions Office of the University, the participants had an intermediate language proficiency level. Their GPAs (General Point Averages) in high school were not lower than 85%. All of them scored higher than 80% in the Philippine Normal University Admission Test (PNUAT). The participants for both groups were majors of Physics under the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) scholarship program. The EG was II-A BSPT and the CG was II-B BSPT.

Most of the participants completed their secondary education in the National Capital Region (NCR). Some came from Regions III and IV-A. A number of participants came from private schools but most of them graduated from public schools. Majority of them had Tagalog as first language and English as second language.

The EG and the CG were determined using a purposive sampling technique (Gay and Airasian 2002). There were 15 participants for each group of whom five were males and 10 were females.

Writing Tasks

There were two writing tasks. The first task was Composition Task (CT) No. 1. It required a descriptive composition about a person/group that the participants admired most. CT 1 was a guided task. Both groups were prompted on the content which included physical description, impression, personal encounter and experience with the subject and the organization of the composition.

The second task was Composition Task No. 2. For this task, the researcher did not provide any additional input—only a prompt to set the general framework of the task. The rationale was to give the participants the liberty to write without any external

intervention. The writing task was on a familiar topic so that content knowledge would not hamper the participants' production.

The topic was based on the State of the Nation Address (SONA) of Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The participants were prompted to write a short composition on what they would do, implement or propose to improve the quality of education in the country.

Procedure

The study was conducted in four weeks. There was a week interval between tasks. A three-day interval was given between the initial production and its modification/revision. Such arrangement was in line with James' (1998) and Lyster's (1998) findings suggesting that a teacher needs to extend wait-time between receiving the feedback and the topic continuation moves to provide opportunities for learners to detect any input-output mismatches. There were two evaluators/raters. In detail, these were the phases of the study:

Phase One: Input Flooding

A one-time input flooding (Ellis, 1998; Doughty and Williams, 1998) was provided in a form of a review on the target language features before the outputs were produced. This was to lessen the possibility that one group would perform better than the other because of prior knowledge of the target language features.

Phase Two: Initial Output and Application of LCs and IE for CT 1

The EG and the CG performed CT 1 for two hours. The task was facilitator-directed. One particular concern about the production of a composition is the possibility of committing varied and wide range of linguistic errors. Because of this, the researcher figured out that identifying and giving of linguistic cues

and input enhancement would be a major concern (Sharwood-Smith, 1998; Han 2002); thus, the focus of the raters for the correction was only the errors on the lexical level (Burt, Dulay and Krashen, 1982). The raters analyzed the outputs, marked the errors and provided linguistic cues to the outputs of the EG.

After the application of linguistic cues and input enhancement on the outputs, the outputs were returned to the participants for revision. The linguistic cues and the input enhancement served as leads for noticing errors and for eventual application of the correct lexical form.

Phase Three: Initial Output and Application of LCs and IE for CT 2

Both the experimental group and the control group performed CT 2. It was a free writing task with no intervention from the teacher-researcher. Minimal prompts were given to both groups. For this task, the rater's focus of correction was on phrasal and clausal language features (Suatengco, 2005; Larsen-Freeman, 1999). Both groups revised the initial output based on LCs and IE provided by the raters.

Phase Four: Application of Stimulated Recall Technique

The focus was on errors and on correction of errors by the learners—how they interpreted the cues and the enhancement provided by the raters.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Q1: What errors were produced by the CG and the EG?

In identifying errors, the researcher considered Corder's (1967) interpretation of an "error" which is a deviation from the language systems as a result of lack of knowledge and

Johansson's (1973) notion that an error causes irritation and is not comprehensible. To categorize the errors produced by the learners, the researcher combined the classification of errors made by Politzer and Ramirez (1973), Murcia and Freeman (1999) and Suatengco (2005). The errors in this study were classified as morphological, phrasal and clausal. An error marked by either of the two raters was considered as one error.

Table 1 shows the 12 lexical items on which the CG and the EG committed an error. The four lexical items that had the most number of errors produced by the CG and the EG were verbs (70, 93), nouns (41, 21), prepositions (26, 15) and pronouns (32, 12).

"Verb" errors included the agreement of verb with the subject e.g. *"My mother never **get** tired of caring for us"*; selection of an appropriate form e.g. *"She **struggled** from those problem,"* inflection of the base form e.g. *"She **input** in my mind"*; and the tense-aspect e.g. *"It was only because of the rumors I **have heard** about her."*

For nouns, they were mostly on pluralization e.g. *"...one of the best **communicator**"*; choice of an appropriate form e.g. *"...most **common** dress."*

For preposition, the errors were on the selection of the correct form of the lexical item e.g. *"I only heard them **in** the radio."* The problem with the utilization of a wrong preposition is that preposition distorts the meaning of a context more than the structure.

For pronouns, the error was on the structural application of a different pronoun, e.g. *"They are the people **which** serve as my guide."*

Both the CG and the EG committed errors on mechanics; most of the errors were on the use of punctuation marks like comma, colon and semicolon. There were also errors on the presence of a non-required lexical form and on the absence of a required lexical item. For example, in the sentence *"I want give the best I can."* It can be noticed that an obligatory "to" is missing. On the other hand, in the structure, *"...may not be familiar to most of the people."* "Of the" is not a required lexical item in the structure.

Over all, the CG committed more lexical errors (333 errors or 57% of the total number of words produced) compared with the EG (247 errors or 43%).

Table 1. Errors Produced by the CG and the EG under the Lexical Level Category

TASK 1 Linguistic Forms (Lexical)	CONTROL GROUP					EXPERIMENTAL GROUP				
	R1	R2	S	D	Total	R1	R2	S	D	Total
Adverb	7	10	5	7	12	10	14	10	4	14
Adjective	3	11	3	8	11	0	2	0	2	2
Conjunction	2	19	2	17	19	5	7	5	2	7
Determiner	7	4	1	9	10	9	10	7	4	11
Gerund	1	8	0	9	9	5	3	3	2	5
Infinitive	2	9	2	7	9	0	1	0	1	1
Modal	1	8	0	7	7	0	5	0	5	5
Noun	12	41	12	29	41	21	15	15	6	21
Preposition	3	26	3	23	26	15	12	12	3	15
Pronoun	10	32	10	22	32	9	12	9	3	12
Participle	5	3	3	2	5	3	5	3	2	5
Verb	23	63	17	53	70	86	66	56	37	93
OTHERS										
Parallelism	1	6	0	7	7	23	20	18	5	23
Punctuation Mark	7	15	2	13	15	3	5	0	8	8
Non-required	12	10	10	2	12	21	18	18	5	23
Missing	33	40	26	21	47	12	14	11	10	21
Spelling	5	2	2	3	5	9	7	7	2	9
TOTAL=333						TOTAL=247				

The table below shows that the CG registered more (98) phrasal errors compared with the EG that registered only 48 errors—less than half the number of errors produced by the CG.

The results reveal that the highest incidence of errors was on the production of noun phrase, prepositional phrase and verb phrase for both the CG and the EG.

The EG registered 10 errors under noun phrase; nine errors under prepositional phrase; and eight errors under verb phrase while the CG registered 24 noun phrase errors; 25 prepositional phrase errors; and 15 verb phrase errors.

The errors produced under this category were mostly on the correct structure of the phrasal form, e.g. “**would be lessing**.” Other errors pertained to proper placement of a phrasal form, e.g. “*Our president declared her plans for our country and **even saying the project**.*” or the combination of both errors.

Table 2. Errors Produced by the CG and the EG under the Phrasal Level Category

LINGUISTIC FEATURES (Phrasal Level)	CONTROL GROUP					EXPERIMENTAL GROUP				
	R1	R2	S	D	Total	R1	R2	S	D	Total
Adverbial	8	6	6	2	8	4	3	3	1	4
Adjective	11	12	11	1	12	3	1	0	4	4
Gerund	3	5	3	2	5	2	2	2	0	2
Infinitive	3	5	3	2	5	5	4	2	5	7
Noun	17	22	15	9	24	10	6	6	4	10
Preposition	25	7	7	18	25	9	2	2	7	9
Verb	3	19	3	16	19	8	8	8	0	8
TOTAL					98					44

For clausal level (Table 3), the CG produced more errors (73 incidence) than the EG (52 incidence). The three clausal items where the CG produced the most number of errors were: coordinate clause (18), subordinate clause (14) and adjective clause (13). On the other hand, the EG produced the most number of errors in adverbial clause (12), adjective clause (8), noun clause (12) and subordinate clause (14).

Under the clausal level, the errors were mostly on the incorrect construction of the syntactically acceptable clausal form, e.g. *“...and speaking of increasing population, lack of classrooms is also a big problem.”* The EG, as compared with the CG, had a minimal number of errors on the proper placement of clausal forms.

For both groups, there were errors relating to the construction of fragments, incorrect predicate structure and production of unparallel clausal forms. There were structural errors that severely affected not only the linguistic accuracy but also the communicative fluency, e.g. *“But of course if there are those bad, ones, we also have the highly exceptional ones.”*

The decrease in the number of errors produced by the learners in the second composition task may be accounted for three factors: focus on clausal errors, familiarity of the groups with the task and longer time extended for modification.

Table 3. Errors Produced by the CG and the EG under the Clausal Level Category

LINGUISTIC FEATURES (Clausal Level)	CONTROL GROUP					EXPERIMENTAL GROUP				
	R1	R2	S	D	Total	R1	R2	S	D	Total
Adverbial	5	6	5	1	6	9	7	5	7	12
Adjective	13	13	13	0	13	8	2	2	6	8
Coordinate	18	12	12	6	18	0	3	0	3	3
Dependent						4	0	0	4	4
Noun	9	12	9	3	12	7	4	4	3	7
Subordinate	11	13	10	4	14	3	6	2	5	7
Verb	10	10	10	0	10	8	7	4	7	3
TOTAL					73					52
OTHERS										
Fragment	18	14	14	4	18	4	2	1	5	6
Predicate	10	4	4	6	10	4	2	2	2	4
Parallelism	5	9	5	4	9	6	6	6	0	10
TOTAL					37					16

Q2: To what extent did L2 learners perform noticing to recognize problematic language features using linguistic cues and input enhancement?

Based on the stimulated recall, both the EG and the CG claimed that the linguistic cues and the input enhancement helped them notice language features; thus, the researcher considered the revised items (marked or unmarked) as noticed language features.

Table 4 shows that for CT 1, the EG that received linguistic cues seemed to have noticed more lexical items (84%) compared with the CG that received input enhancement (76%); nevertheless, findings suggest that both input enhancement and

linguistic cues may have helped in recognizing lexical items. This is based on the high percentages of revisions performed on marked items (84% for the EG and 76% for the CG) and low percentages of the unrevised on marked item (25% for the EG and 14% for the CG).

The results further suggest that linguistic cues contributed more in noticing lexical problems than in the input enhancement. Such noticing may have triggered the revision of the marked lexical items. The input enhancement may also have contributed in guiding the CG to notice lexical errors; however, the CG still had to decipher the exact lexical error committed. On the other hand, the EG appeared to have been directed to the linguistic cues not only on the location of the error but also on the type of error committed. Both groups had to agree or disagree on the linguistic cues provided by the rater or evaluator. Moreover, the high percentage of modified marked items indicates learner's agreement with the rater's observations.

The revisions of lexical errors were done in isolation, e.g. in the structured "*I was afraid to her*," the "*to*" was a marked item. The learner changed "*to*" with preposition "*of*"; thus, the sentence read: "*I was afraid of her*." However, if the context of the lexical item appeared to be problematic, so was the restructuring performed by the participants. Take the sentence, "*Our group is a combination of people*." When corrected, it read "*Our group is composed of unique individuals*."

Such result may be associated with Nobuyoshi and Ellis' (1003) findings in small scale study on pushed output suggesting that learners' exert efforts to modify/reproduce their initial ill-formed utterances may prompt them to notice the discrepancy between their IL grammars and the TL norms (Ellis, 1998).

Table 4. Occurrence of Revised Marked Lexical Items for Composition Task No. 1

GROUPS	Number of occurrence	Number of revised items	% of revised items	Number of unrevised items	% of unrevised items
Control Group	333	248	74%	84	25%
Experimental Group	247	213	86%	34	14%

Results of the CT 2 revealed that the EG had the highest incidence of revision on marked items (95%) compared with the CG (67%). With the unrevised marked item, the EG had 5% while the CG had 33%. This may indicate that the EG noticed more linguistic errors than the CG did, and that the EG performed modifications on these errors better than the CG. The low percentage on the revision of the CG may indicate that input enhancement did not seem to provide sufficient explicit cues to effect modification. This claim is in line with other research findings that showed explicit corrective feedback could prompt learners to notice the gap by directly and overtly drawing their attention to the incorrect form they constructed; moreover, Lyster and Ranta (1997) found out that a corrective feedback that invites self-generated repair provides opportunities for learners to “automatize the retrieval of target language knowledge that already exists in some forms.”

Table 5. Occurrence of Revised Marked Phrasal and Clausal Items for Composition Task No. 2

GROUPS	# of Occurrence	# Of revised items	% of revised items	# Of unrevised items	% of unrevised items
Control	208	139	67%	69	33%
Experimental	112	106	95%	6	5%

Table 6 reveals that both groups revised unmarked items for both tasks. In CT 1, the CG performed more revisions while in CT 2, the EG. The revision of the unmarked items might have depended on how comprehensible the participants thought of their outputs with due consideration to the revisions they have made on the marked items. Furthermore, these revisions might have been triggered by the participants' analysis of the meaning, given the new structures on marked items. This may also have been triggered by the presence of the linguistic cues and input enhancement. As claimed by both groups, although they focused on the marked items, they too reviewed the context in which these marked items were set in.

Table 6. Occurrence of Revised Unmarked Linguistic Items for Composition Task No. 1 and No. 2

GROUPS	CT 1	CT 2
	Occurrence of revised unmarked items	
Control Group	39	15
Experimental Group	18	47

Q3: Did the group that was provided with linguistic cues in the output more ably perform appropriate modifications on language features than the group that received input enhancement?

In Table 7, the results illustrate that the EG had more correct revisions on marked items (CT1-87% and CT2-94%) than the CG (CT1-78% and CT2-86%) for both tasks. It can be noticed that the unmarked items had lower percentages of correct revisions across groups and tasks. During the stimulated recall, the group that received linguistic cues said that the linguistic cues helped them reassess their production. They claimed linguistic cues provided them with the opportunity to reevaluate their outputs by conferring with their schema of the language systems in line with the evaluator's intention. The results confirmed with Heift (2004) study on corrective feedback to learner uptake in CALL to 177 students from the three Canadian Universities.³

This suggests that making the feature salient is an important condition to notice linguistic features; the application of linguistic cues and input enhancement would both help, but more so, the linguistic cues.

Such findings seem to concord with Schmidt and Frota (1986) and Ellis' (1993) argument that explicit knowledge serves as facilitator that assists learners to notice language features in the input and which they could compare with what they produce that became a condition for the application of the appropriate corrections.

With input enhancement (e.g. underlining), the problem appeared to rest on the interpretation of the enhanced items because the learner might have a different interpretation of the

³ The study results indicate that the feedback that provides an explanation of an error and highlights the error (metalinguistics + highlighting) in the student input is most effective in eliciting learners' uptake regardless of their language proficiency and gender.

error. For example “I was” in which “was” was enhanced. “Were” would be the immediate option to replace “was.” However, the teacher’s intent was to have “was” changed to “have + past participle.” Such finding is supportive of other research findings that show teacher’s intended pedagogical focus and the learner’s actual pedagogical focus often differ substantially (Jones, 1992; Slimani, 1991).

At times there are two lexical errors in one input enhanced lexical item. For example, “to becomes” is the first error that concerns with the use of “s” for the verb “become.” The second error concerns with the syntax where “to becomes” is set in. In cases similar to this, the CG made only one of the required modifications. Hence, the correction would be “to become” instead of “to be.” It can be noticed that the first required modification was done because it appeared to be easier and more obvious than the second one. Given this condition, Han (2002) proposed for a fine-tuned corrective feedback. He believes that corrective feedback is not a one-way but a two-way process—an interdependent process. This supports Seedhouse’s (1997) suggestion to have a provision of more direct and overt corrective feedback to benefit the learner. Hence, a matching between the rater’s intent and the learner interpretation needs to be established clearly. Such matching can be concretized by using linguistic cues.

Table 7. Incidence of Application of Corrections for Composition Tasks No. 1 and 2

GROUPS	TASK 1						TASK 2					
	Revised		Correct		Percentage		Revised		Correct		Percentage	
	M	U	M	U	M	U	M	U	M	U	M	U
Control Group	248	39	193	21	78%	53%	139	15	120	8	86%	53%
Experimental Group	213	18	187	10	87%	55%	106	47	100	32	94%	68%

Legend: M – Modifier U – Unchanged

Q4: Were the modified outputs for Composition Tasks 1 and 2 of the experimental group more comprehensible than the modified outputs of the control group?

The EG outputs rated higher in *Brown's Rating Scale for Compositions* (2002) than the CG's outputs by 2 mean points for CT 1 (10,12) and 3 mean points for CT2 (11, 14). In terms of fluency, the EG outputs for both tasks were easier to read and to understand and the messages were clearly expressed. As to linguistic accuracy, the EG again were more linguistically accurate than the CG for both tasks producing less errors on lexical, phrasal and clausal levels.

To achieve comprehensibility, both groups performed the following: noticing the LCs and the IEs of the raters, reflecting on the marked by conforming or disagreeing; deciding on the appropriate corrections on the marked items based on the cues provided; and consulting a peer or a language tool (dictionary) in cases of a mismatch between their reflection and the raters' intention. This may indicate that noticing of language features whether linguistic cues or input enhancement may not only draw learners to the target form but also may provide them with an opportunity to reflect and to hypothesize on the target form. Although both forms of feedback benefited the participants, results show that linguistic cues far more benefited the participants than the input enhancement (underlining). This agrees with Carroll and Swain's (1993) findings on corrective feedback that provided empirical evidence of the gains of corrective feedback.⁴ Carroll and Swain reasoned that explicit feedback might have been of more benefit because it identified the precise location and nature of erroneous performance, while implicit negative feedback require the learners to engage in a good deal of mental

⁴ Study of Carroll and Swain (1993) on corrective feedback provided empirical evidence on the gains of explicit or implicit corrective feedback. Their study on English dative alteration showed that those who were provided with corrective feedback generally outperformed the comparison group both on immediate posttest and on delayed posttest administered a week later.

guesswork. They believe that corrective feedback needs to be explicit enough for learners to notice it as a correction without any ambiguities; a condition that is not present in input enhancement. Such findings are also in line with Lightbrown and Spada's (1990) view that a teacher's explicit paralinguistic cues may draw the learners' attention to their errors, which in turn may lead to successful pedagogical intervention. Chaudron (1977), on the basis of his analysis of students' performance in the classroom, also found that teachers' corrections that worked best were those that "the learner needs some guidance as to what the something is when recognizing that the teacher is seeking something."

Table 8. Level of Comprehensibility of Composition Tasks No. 1 and 2
Outputs after Modification

GROUPS	CT 1- POSTTEST	CT 2 POSTTEST
Control Group	10	11
Experimental Group	12	14

CONCLUSIONS

Over all, it appeared that the errors were on all aspects of the target language systems—lexical, phrasal and clausal levels indicating that the learners both in the EG and in the CG have not yet acquired the target language. The type and range of linguistic errors may be compared with the linguistic errors in Duskova's (1969) study⁵; nevertheless, there were minimal error as far as word order or language feature placement is concerned, that is,

⁵ Duskova (1969) identified a total of 1,007 errors in the written work of 50 Czech learners of English, who were post graduate students studying science. She found 758 'recurrent systematic errors' and 252 nonce errors (errors that occurred only once). Errors in articles were most common (260) followed by lexis (233) and morphology (180) and only 54 errors in syntax and 31 in word order.

the standard S-P (Subject-Predicate) pattern appeared to have been acquired by the participants. This is similar to the findings of Suatengco's (2005) study on applying functions showing sentence pattern (S-P) as one system in the language that the learners appeared to have nearly acquired as far as the obligatory structure is concerned.

The wide range of errors gives the impression that "gaps" between the IL and the target language (Swain, 1995) may be present. These language gaps to be noticed require a signal from the interlocutor (Ranta, 2001).

Since the tasks did not deliberately seek out production of an interrogative structure, the researcher did not find any error on the construction of an interrogative sentence; the researcher could not provide any observation along this line. There was a more than 50% error consistency as marked by raters 1 and 2.

Evidences showed that linguistic cues and input enhancement triggered noticing and hypothesis testing for both tasks; however, linguistic cues were more direct and they eliminated issue on confusion and on misinterpretation while input enhancement could lead to misinterpretation and mismatch between the learner's interpretation and the evaluator's intention.

With the use of highlights, the learners appeared to perform more cognitive activities compared with the learners who received linguistic cues. The input enhancement group performed noticing the problem in the target form, identifying the target form, and applying corrective measures.

The implication of having too many cognitive tasks might cause confusion among the learners at some point. Whereas, the linguistic cues group performed only two cognitive tasks confer whether or not they believe the target form is really a problem in the production, and perform corrective measures if the evaluator's

interpretation agree with the learner's own evaluation. These tasks were far easier to handle as opposed to the first one.

The errors produced by the two groups even before the application of corrective measures support argument that the evaluator's feedback whether linguistic cues or input enhancement do not immediately result in acquisition; such that lexical acquisition process has stages and therefore not immediate; moreover, it exhibits developmental patterns (Blum & Levenston, 1978; Laufer, 1990; Meara, 1984; Shirai, 1990). None of these sits well with simplistic notions of "what you teach, when you teach it, is what they learn," Doughty and Williams (1998).

A dialogue, internal or otherwise, was also utilized by the participants in completely understanding the feedback provided by the evaluators/raters. Dialogue is a mode in language learning that Swain (1995) argued encourages acquisition among learners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above conclusions, the researcher recommended the following:

1. Error corrections using linguistic cues be applied in the written production/outputs of SL learners;
2. A study that would explore the effects and contributions of metatalk and dialogue in the SLA processing by learners be conducted; and
3. With different methodology and with a focused linguistic item/s, this study be replicated.

REFERENCES

- Blum, S., & Levenston, E. (1978). *Universals of Lexical Simplifications*. *Language Learning*, 68/4, 399-415.
- Carroll, S., & Swain, M. (1993). *Explicit and Implicit Negative Feedback. An Empirical Study of the Learning of Linguistic Generalization*. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 15, 357-386.
- Celce-Murcia, M. & Larsen-Freeman, D. (1998). *The Grammar Book: An ESL/EFL Teacher's Course* 2nd Ed. Los Angeles: International Thomson Publishing, Inc.
- Chaundron, C. (1977). *A Descriptive Model of Discourse in the Corrective Treatment of Learners' Errors*. *Language Learning*, 27, 29-46.
- Corder, S. P. (1967). *The Significance of Learners' Errors*. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 5, 161-170.
- Doughty, Catherine and Williams, Jessica (Eds). (1998). *Focus on Form in Classroom Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Duskova, L. (1969). *On Sources of Errors in Foreign Language Learning*. *International Review of Applied Linguistics* 7: 11-36.
- Gass, S. (1998). *Integrating Research Areas: A Framework for Second Language Studies*. *Applied Linguistics* 9, 198-217.
- Gay, C.R. and Ainasian, P. (2002). *Educational Analysis: Competencies for Analysis and Application*, 6th Edition. Ohio: Prentice Hall
- Han, Z-H. (2002). *Rethinking of Corrective Feedback in Communicative Language Teaching*. *RELC Journal*, 33, 1-33.
- Heift, Trude. (2004). *Corrective Feedback and Learner Uptake in CALL*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/display/abstract>
- Izumi, S. & Bigelow, M. (2000). *Does Output Promote Noticing and Second Language Acquisition?* *TESOL Quarterly*, 34, 239-278.
- James, C. (1998). *Errors in Language Learning*. London and New York: Longman

-
- Jones, F.R. (1992). *A Language Teaching Machine: Input, Uptake and Output in the Communicative Classroom*. *System*, 20/2, pp. 133-150.
- http://www.sdkrashen.com/articles/comprehensible_output/all.html.
- Laufer, B. (1990). *Sequence and Order in the Development of L2 Lexis: Some Evidence from Lexical Confusions*. *Applied Linguistics*, 11/3, 281-296.
- Lynch, T. (2001). *Seeing What They Mean: Transcribing as a Route to Noticing*. *ELTJ* 55 2.124-132.
- Lyster R. and Ranta, L. (1997). *Corrective Feedback and Learner Uptake: Negotiation Form in Communication Classrooms*, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19, 37-66
- McLaughlin, B. (1990). "Conscious" versus "Unconscious" Learning. *TESOL Quarterly* 24, 617-631.
- Meara, P. 1984. *The Study of Lexis in Interlanguage*. In A. Davies, C. Criper, & A. Howatt. (Eds.), *Interlanguage*, pp. 225-235. Edinburgh University Press.
- Oliver, R. (2000). *Age Difference in Negotiation and Feedback in Classroom and Pairwork*. *Language Learning*, 50, 119-151.
- Politzer, R. and A. Ramirez. (1973). *An Error Analysis of the Spoken English of Mexican-American Pupils in a Bilingual School and Monolingual School*. *Language Learning* 18:35-53.
- Rutherford, W. (1987). *Second language grammar: Learning and teaching*. London: Longman.
- Schmidt, R. (1990). *The Role of Consciousness in Second Language Learning*. *Applied Linguistics*, 11, 129-158.
- _____. R. (1995). *Consciousness and Foreign Language Learning: A Tutorial on the Role of Attention and Awareness in Learning*. In R, Schmidt (Ed), *Attention and awareness in foreign language learning* (pp 1-63). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- _____. & Frota, S. (1986). *Developing Basic Conversation Ability in a Second Language: A Case Study of an Adult Learner for Portuguese*. In R.R. Day (Ed.), *Talking to Learn: Conversation in*

-
- Second Language Acquisition (pp.237-326). Cambridge, MS: Newbury House.
- Seedhouse, P. (1997). *The Case of Missing "No": The Relationship between Pedagogy and Interaction*. *Language Learning*, 47, 547-583.
- Sharwood-Smith, M. (1991). *Speaking to the Many Minds: on the Relevance of Different types of Language Information for the L2 Learner*. *Second Language Research*, 7, 118-133.
- Sharwood-Smith, M. (1981). *Consciousness-raising and the Second Language Learner*. *Applied Linguistics II*, 159-169
- Shirai, Y. (1990). *U-shape Behavior in L2 Acquisition*. Paper Presented at Second Language Research Forum, Eugene, OR.
- Slimani, A. (1992). *Evaluation of Classroom Interaction*. In C. Alderson & A. Berretta (Eds.), *Evaluating Second Language Education*, 197-220. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Spada, N. & Lightbrown, P. (1993). *Instruction and the Development of Question in the L2 Classroom*. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 15, 205-221.
- Suatengco, R. (2005). *Applying Output Functions and Intervention Strategies in the Acquisition of Grammar: A test of Merrill Swain's Output Hypothesis*. Seminar Paper, PNU.
- Swain, M. 1985. *Communicative Competence: Some Roles of Comprehensible Input and Comprehensible Output in Its Development*. In S.M. Gass & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition*, pp.235-253. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- _____, M. (1995). *Three Functions of Output in Second Language Learning*. In G. Cook & B. Seidlhofer (Eds.), *Principles and practice in the study of language: Studies in honour of H.G. Widdowson*, pp 125-144. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Truscott, J. (1998). *Noticing in Second Language Acquisition: A Critical Review*. *SLA Research* 14, 103-135.
- Woodfield, David J. (1998). *Output and Beyond to Dialogue: a Review of Merrill Swain's Current Approach to SLA*.