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HOW OUTPUT AND INTERACTION PLAY A CENTRAL ROLE IN SLA

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Abstract:

This dissertation provides a deep analysis of the main SLA theories, such as: Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1983) and Swain's Output Hypothesis (1985), with the aim of highlighting the importance of developing a learning environment where learners not only receive the L2 but also, they are encouraged to produce and interact with their peers. For this purpose, the use of corrective feedback along with negotiation of meaning will deserve a special attention during this investigation due to different scholar's perspective about one single issue. Finally, given the nature of the theoretical aspects and investigations carried out in the early 80s, I have prepared a questionnaire with the purpose of testing 70 students at all to figure out whether or not output and interaction play a central role in the acquisition of a L2 nowadays.

Keywords: Comprehensible input, Comprehensible output, negotiation of form, natural order, to be pushed.

Resumen:

Este trabajo Fin de Grado ofrece un análisis profundo a las principales teorías de la adquisición de un segundo idioma, tales como; la hipótesis del input realizada por Krashen (1982), la hipótesis de la interacción llevada a cabo por Long (1983) y la hipótesis del output propuesta por Swain (1985), con el objetivo de destacar la importancia de un ambiente de aprendizaje donde los aprendices no solo reciben la L2, pero también, sean animados a producir e interactuar con sus compañeros. Para este propósito, el uso de la retroalimentación correctiva junto a la negociación del significado merecerá una especial atención durante esta investigación debido a las diferentes perspectivas académicas sobre un mismo asunto.

Finalmente, dada la naturaleza de los aspectos teóricos e investigaciones en la adquisición de un segundo idioma llevados a cabo a principios de los 80, he preparado un cuestionario con el propósito de poner a prueba a un total de 70 estudiantes para averiguar si el output y la interacción juegan un rol central en la adquisición o no en nuestros días.

Palabras Clave: input comprensible, output comprensible, negociación de la forma, orden natural, ser empujado.

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Introduction

Input, interaction and output are three essential elements in L2 acquisition, they share a cyclical relationship because of their proximity. It is a well-known fact that without any of them, acquisition will never be accomplished effectively. However, there have been several debates about their specific role for decades. This dissertation will explore the main reasons why some scholars such as Krashen (1982), Long (1983) and Swain (1985) give more prominence to one aspect instead of another in SLA literature, providing empirical evidences to support their viewpoints. Many of their arguments appeared as a way of criticism, comment or reaction against specific ideas, that is why, all types of critiques and contradictions in their theories has been gathered so as to enrich the overall analysis. Thus, this dissertation is organized as follows: an efficient explanation of input, output and interaction in SLA, analysis of the main hypothesis considering all their variables and, finally, an educational research has been conducted throughout a questionnaire with 70 participants so as to figure out whether students recognize output and interaction as an essential part in their language proficiency. Moreover, they will explain how, when and in what ways they like to be corrected, and last but not least, whether or not their habits using the L2 outside the classroom are reflected on their academic results.

Theoretical framework: Input, interaction and output

1.1 Input

Input is considered as “the language that encodes meanings”. Furthermore, input should contain “meaning to which the learner attends for its propositional content”. (Vanpatten and Codierno, 1993, p. 46). it is commonly known that for SLA happen there must be two prerequisites: L2 input available to the learners and a set of internal mechanism to account for how L2 data area processed (Ellis, 1985). There are three perspectives concerning the role of input such as: behaviorist, mentalist and interactional view. The behaviorist perspective was the leading theory during the late 50s, it considered that learners acquired a language due to the effects of a stimulus-response connection. In other words, learning took place when speakers are able to respond different inputs and, consequently, acquisition is fulfilled depending on the reinforcement that they receive (Ellis 1997). On the contrary, mentalist theory pays special attention to the importance of the learner’s “back box” which was completely ignored by the behaviorist. They

highlighted that human's brains are inherently equipped with a "Language Acquisition Device" to learn a language in comparison with other species. Therefore, input is only needed to trigger acquisition (Ellis 1997). Interactionist theories "acknowledge the importance of both input and internal language processing, emphasizing the joint contribution of linguistic environment and the learners' inner mechanism in interaction activities" (Zang, 2009, p. 92).

1.2 Interaction

Interaction in SLA refers to the verbal exchanges in which there is some indication that an utterance has not been entirely comprehended and participants need to interrupt the flow of the conversation in order for both parties to assimilate what the conversation is about (Gass & Selinker, 2001). Moreover, Allwright (1984) considers interaction as "the fundamental fact of classroom pedagogy" due to "everything happening in the classroom happens through a process of live person-to-person interaction" (p. 156). Along with this argument, Marharsi (2011) asserts that "through interaction, L2 learners understand their competence in applying the knowledge they have learned" (p. 50). According to the interactionalist perspective, the term acquisition is perceived as "a product of the complex interaction of the linguistic environment and the learner's internal mechanism, with neither viewed as primary" (Ellis, 2003, p. 243). Despite the fact that there are several interactionalist theories, there are two significant views which are largely recognized: the cognitive interactionists and the social interactionist. The former focuses on the "learner's internal mechanism", by contrast, the latter concentrates on the "verbal interaction" which relates to the learners' ability to cope with the message (Maharsi 2011). Both views highlight the essential role of interaction so as to accomplish SLA effectively.

1.3 Output

Output is the language a learner produces. Merrill Swain, who is the most important figure for Output Hypothesis, argued that output also plays a key role in L2 acquisition because it forces students to move from comprehension to syntactic use of language. As Swain (1995) states:

Output may stimulate learners to move from semantic, open-ended nondeterministic strategic processing prevalent in comprehension to the complete grammatical processing needed for accurate production. Output, thus, would seem to have a potentially significant role in development of syntax and morphology. (p. 128)

Along with this statement, Izumi (2002) asserts that “output constitutes not just the product of acquisition or the means by which to practice one’s language for greater fluency but also a potentially important causal factor in the acquisition process” (p. 545)

Theories on SLA

2. Input Hypothesis

Krashen (1982) suggests that learners experience advancement in their acquisition process when they are presented with and successfully comprehend an input that is in the level of ‘i+1’. The ‘i’ refers to learners’ current level of knowledge about one specific L2 and ‘+1’ the stage slightly more complicated than the ‘i’. Thus, learners who want to improve their current level of proficiency in any target language they have to be exposed to the L2 input which follows a logical order as for example: “i + 1/2/3”. Moreover, Krashen (1989) argues that:

the best methods of language learning are therefore those that supply “comprehensible input” in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear. These methods do not force early production in the second language, but allow students to produce when they are “ready”, recognizing that improvements come from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production. (p.22)

Akan (2018) supports this notion stating that “acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language – natural communication- in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding”. (p.120). Therefore, there are several steps which learners should follow to acquire a L2 correctly (See figure 1).

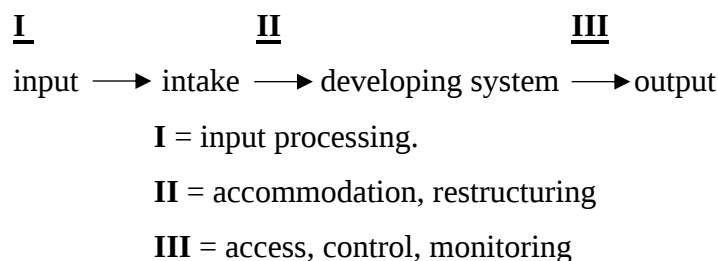


Fig 1. A model of second language acquisition and use (based on VanPatten, 1995)

According to Fang (2010), the first step is to convert input into intake, which is known as “input processing”. It basically means that learners must develop an acquired system with the received input despite the fact that not all the information from the intake is turned into the acquired system. The second step is related to learners’ perception of words frequency which appear between their current interlanguage (IL) competence and the L2 form. In other words, the more they encounter certain words, the more they will acquire them. Finally, the third step consist of certain aspects of language production, for instance, the monitoring, accessing and controlling of knowledge. (Fang, 2010)

2.1 Critiques of the Input Hypothesis

The input hypothesis was criticized persistently in the field of SLA due to its emphasis on the role of input in L2 learning. Indeed, several researches not only questioned Krashen’s hypothesis but also provided some evidences so as to show the flaws in his statements. MacLaughlin (1987) argued that Krashen never clarified the real meaning of comprehensible input and the formulation $i+1$ because of his inconsistency. He first states that i is “our current level of competence” as a result $i + 1$ refers to “the next level along the natural order” (Krashen, 1985, p. 2). It seems that he is discussing about one’s “level of competence”. However, he also claimed that $i+1$ refers to “structure at our next stage” giving the notion of a grammatical interpretation. Consequently, White (1987) criticized him for his lack of providing “specific syntactic illustrations” (p. 97). Moreover, it is difficult to understand how to determine “the next level along the natural order” (Krashen, 1985) due to the inconsistency of the word “natural order”. According to MacLaughlin (1987) it is “a non-existent theory of acquisition sequences” (p.137). It

seems extremely complex for the Input Hypothesis to classify the correct order of structures to be acquired first and what next “along the natural order”.

It should be noted that there are some scholars who consider that the acquisition of structures can take place even without input. As Liu (2015) suggests “internal factors or internally-driven systems can also foster grammatical change and lead to the acquisition of certain grammatical structures” (p. 144). Similarly, Berwinck and Weinberg (1984) conducted a study in which they showed how children are able to learn the passive form of their L1, with only their existing syntactic or lexical knowledge, without requiring any explanation or additional information. Thus, White (1987) claims that “there may be more than one potential route for grammar change” (p. 98).

As a matter of fact, some structures can be utilized by L2 learners without being “comprehensible” at all. For example, formulaic expressions such as idioms, pause fillers, swearing, chunks, multiword units. They have a positive impact in speaker’s fluency (Nation & Meara, 2010)

3. Interaction hypothesis

The interaction hypothesis proposed by Long (1983) is a well-known fact. This hypothesis refers to “the way in which speakers modify their speech and interaction patterns in order to help learners participate in a conversation or understand meaning in a new language” (Lightbown and Spada, 2013 p.114). Moreover, interaction is also considered a practical tool for learners in the development of oral fluency in the acquisition of the second language with either native speakers or nonnative speakers. As a matter of fact, Gass (2007) asserts that “it is in this context that learners receive information about the correctness and more important, about the incorrectness of their utterances” (p.24). Interaction hypothesis first made its appearance as a form of criticism against the comprehensible input hypothesis by Krashen (1982) because Swain (1985) states that “input may be essential to the acquisition of a second language; it is not enough to ensure that the outcome will be nativelike performance” (p.236).

Furthermore, Long (1983) questions Krashen on specifically how an input is made comprehensible to learners, and criticizes him on his lack of putting emphasis on the importance of interaction in acquiring a second language. As Krashen (1989) argues “improvements come from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production” (p. 22). Thus, Long (1996) suggested the notion of modified interaction which he believes is precisely what makes comprehensible input

‘comprehensible’ to L2 learners and prompt them to do their best utilizing the target language. Modified interaction occurs when interlocutors experience difficulties in communicating and therefore there are verbal adjustments to make the conversation easier to understand. More often than not, native speakers employ modification strategies in their utterances to help non-native speakers understand the contents of the speech. As a result, learners are constantly encouraged to participate actively in the conversation and motivated to learn more about the language (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). On top of that, intensive interaction facilitates students’ learning because their exposure to the target language will help them to build “cognitive systems” which can be activated any time when a stimulus is provided (Gass and Selinker, 2001). Similarly, Maharsi (2011) argues that “the more intensive interaction that involves cognitive and social domains, the better the language performance and the closer the second language acquisition are”. (p.51)

4. Feedback

There are two broad types of feedback: explicit and implicit. The former refers to corrections and metalinguistic explanations, for example, “that is a wrong word” (Saville-Troike, 2006, p.110). However, the latter includes negotiation strategies such as confirmation checks, clarification requests, comprehension checks and recasts (Gerald, 2000). Bitchener & Ferris (2012) state that corrective feedback can accelerate language learning. Nonetheless, it should be noted that, there are several scholars who consider that one type of corrective feedback is more beneficial than the other in terms of SLA. Lalande (1982) suggests that implicit corrective feedback allow students to reconstruct grammatical structures with the specific intention of trying to make them more precise. Similarly, Haswell (1983) claims that “corrective feedback not only guides learners to independently solve the problem, but also builds up their agency and enables them to take more responsibility for their own grammatical errors” (p. 184). However, Carroll and Swain (1993) conducted a study with 100 adults in which they reported that “providing indirect feedback, and even providing the right forms did not help as much as the explicit metalinguistic information” (p. 372). Along with this, Ellis et al. (2006) points out that explicit metalinguistic corrective feedback is better than recasts in relation to the acquisition of English past tense.

5. Negotiation in SLA

Long (1996) additionally suggested that native speakers or competent ones modify their speech when they notice that lower-level learners struggle to understand the message during the interaction. Thus, they provoke adjustments to the linguistic form until an acceptable level of comprehension is achieved (See Excerpt 1).

Excerpt 1

NS: What's the boy's name?

NSS: Uh?

NS: The boy, what's his name

(Long 1983, p. 121)

There are two main objectives in the modification of the syntactic complexity of this utterance: avoid conversational trouble as well as to repair the discourse when trouble occurs (Long 1983). This process of modification is called negotiation of meaning and negotiation of form which sometimes are overlapped in the SLA literature. Pica (1994) explains that negotiation is “the modification and restructuring of interaction that occurs when learners and their interlocutors anticipate, perceive, or experience difficulties in message comprehensibility” (p. 494). Both authors, among others, show one common feature in their definitions of negotiation: the ultimate goal is the message comprehensibility.

5.1 Types of negotiation

Lyster (2007) defines negotiation of meaning as “conversational moves used in dyadic interaction to facilitate comprehension and hypothesized to benefit second language development are generally subsumed under the rubric of negotiation for meaning” (p. 2007). Similarly, Ellis et al. (2001) also affirms that “the negotiation of meaning is directed at enabling the participants to achieve mutual understanding in order for communication to proceed” (p. 414). Some examples of negotiation of meaning are: confirmation check, clarification requests and comprehension check, as they are exemplified in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 2

- 1 NNS: I don't like because the people from that country – The mens are and the
womens – The men they think too much
- 2 NS: I've heard others say that also
- 3 NNS: My country say the people from there the many many times all time they say they
are the last *aysti* in the Sahara.
- 4 NS: the last *aysti*? *aysti*?
- 5 NNS: They say maybe another word. In the Sahara *understand*?
- 6 NS: I understand Sahara, but I don't understand *aysti*
- 7 NNS: they say I am –
- 8 NS: right, I am the best last –
- 9 NNS: the last *aysti* in the Sahara
- 10 NS: but what's *aysti*?
- 11 NNS: is too how in the Sahara there are no water
- 12 NS: no, no but *they're last aysti*?
- 14 NS: iced tea! I see
- 15 NNS: or the or the last very cold coke
- 16 NS: all right I see

(Pica, 1987, pp. 7-8)

Pica (1987) uses this excerpt to illustrate the meaning negotiation of *aysti*, for this reason, despite the several grammatical mistakes which the NNS made, the NS only pays attention to *aysti* so as to figure out its meaning. With this in mind, it is noticeable the uses of negotiation strategies such as confirmation check (Line 4) and clarification requests (Line 10 and Line 12). Confirmation check refers to “moves by which one speaker seeks confirmation of the other's preceding utterance through repetition, with rising intonation, of what was perceived to be all or part of the preceding utterance” (Pica

et al., 1987, p. 740). Whereas, Clarification requests are “moves by which one speaker seeks assistance in understanding the other speaker’s preceding utterance through question, statements such as *I don’t understand*, or imperatives such as *Please repeat*”. (Pica et al., 1987, p. 740). In this particular excerpt, NS is constantly encouraging the NNS to make his message clearer and, most importantly, NS is not teaching to the NNS how to pronounce *ice tea* properly, he is only maintaining a conversation. In other words, “the negotiation of meaning is conversational or communicative in function” (Ellis et al., 2001, p. 414).

On the contrary, negotiation of form focuses on teachers’ aim to correct students’ errors that could slow progress of effective communication (Suzuki 2018). It entails clarification requests (in form), metalinguistic feedback, elicitation and repetition. Lyster (2007) points out that clarification request (in form) refers to the moment in which teachers let students know that their utterance is ungrammatical acceptable or poorly made, so as to require them to reformulate it, as it is exemplified with the use of *I’m sorry* in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 3

S: I want practice today, today.

T: I’m sorry?

(Sheen 2004: 278)

Metalinguistic feedback means “the teacher provides comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the student’s utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form” (Lyster 2007, p. 110). As it could be observed in Excerpt 4.

Excerpt 4

S: There are influence person who –

T: Influential is an adjective

S: Influential – (unintelligible) - person because of his power

(Sheen 2004, p. 278)

Elicitation alludes to the moment in which “the teacher directly elicits correct forms from students by asking questions such as *How do we say that in French* or by

using pausing to allow students to complete the teacher's utterance, or by asking students to reformulate their utterance" (Lyster 2007, p. 110). As it could be observed in the following excerpt.

Excerpt 5

S: When you go Hongkong, you might have a /conflit/ with a guide.

T: Um, *you may have a –*

S: A /conflit/ with a guide

T: A conflict with a guide.

(Lyster 2007, p. 130)

Repetitions makes reference to the teacher's reiteration of student's errors adjusting the intonation to emphasize the error. (Lyster 2007, p. 109)

Excerpt 6

S: What we can in the, the spare time is reading and doing something signal. But now

T: *Doing something signal?*

(Suzuki 2018, p. 10)

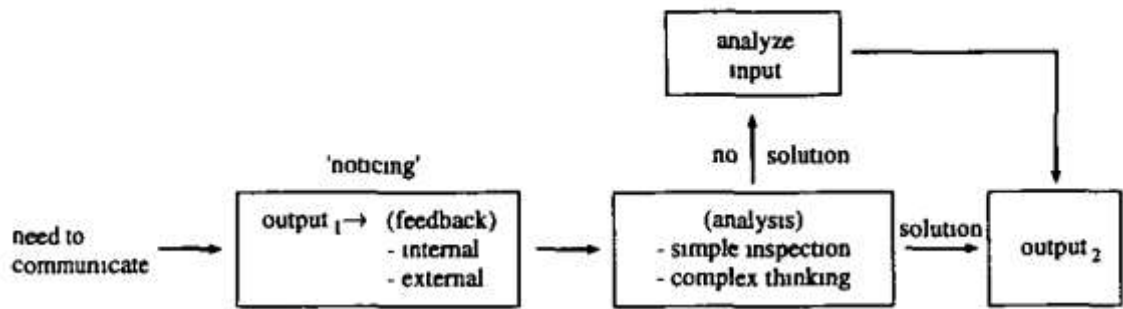
Thus, it should be noted that depending on the causes of the negotiations two objectives will be present distinctively. As Ellis et al. (2001) state:

The negotiation of meaning is entirely communicative in orientation, as it is directed at enabling the participants to achieve mutual understanding in order for communication to proceed.... The negotiation of form is didactic in orientation, as it is directed at improving accuracy and precision when no problem of understanding has arisen. (p. 414)

6. Output hypothesis

To begin with, it is essential to point out a general background of the output hypothesis. For several years, in the SLA literature, output did not have enough importance due to the fact that it was just considered a mere sign of practicing one's knowledge that has been already accomplished without any significant role in the overall SLA process (Gass, 1997). As Krashen (1989) states "we can develop extremely high

levels of language and literacy competence without any language production at all” (p. 177). However, since the publication of Swain’s “output hypothesis” the Krashen’s limited perspective related to output was questioned. In fact, output hypothesis emerged as a direct reaction to Krashen’s statements about the prominent role of “comprehensible input” in SLA. Empirical evidences on Canadian immersion programmes led Swain to refute that comprehensible input is not enough for learners to achieve their L2 competence effectively. Swain (1985) asserts that what learners need is not only input comprehensible but also comprehensible output so as to improve their fluency and accuracy using the L2. In other words, receiving input constantly is not sufficient; learners have to produce the L2 by themselves and analyze whether or not the hearer understands their messages properly. By practising it, learners are going to experience communication difficulties and notice the gap between what linguistic aspects are fully learned or need more improvement (Izumi, 2003). That is why, Swain (1985) also states that the main purpose of comprehensible output is to make L2 learners to be “pushed toward the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but that is conveyed precisely, coherently, and appropriately” (p. 249). Similarly, Nobuyoshi and Ellis (1993) conducted a study with 30 adults in which they conclude that “pushing learners to improve the accuracy of their production results not only in immediate improved performance but also in gains accuracy over time” (p. 249). However, the action of “being pushed” has being criticized frequently because it might provoke uneasy feelings or uncertain situations, especially for those low-level learners. According to Prince (1991) “the greatest source of anxiety was having to speak the target language in front of the peers (p. 105) or as Sacco (1992) explains “speaking was the highest anxiety causing activity” (p.93). Nonetheless, Swain and Lapkin (1995) explain that teachers have an enormous responsibility so as to reduce student’ anxiety and provide a detailed explanation about how language production contributes significantly to L2 learner’s improvement.



(Swain and Lapkin 1995 p. 388)

Firstly, L2 learners produce an output in the target language. This is also known as fluency function which, basically, refers to those opportunities that learners need to use their L2 knowledge in different contexts. Secondly, the notion of consciousness-raising appeared when they receive feedback in two different ways; internally or externally. Both types of feedback are connected with the fact that they detect a “gap between what they want to say and what they can say, leading them to recognize that they do not know, or know only partially” (Swain 1995, p. 125). Consequently, it motivates learners to reevaluate their previous output in order to develop a complex thinking about them. Two alternatives appear in this phase: hypothesis testing and metalinguistic function. The former refers to the fact that learners are able to figure out a more accurate output in form of solution; if this is not the case, a deeply analysis of the input should be fulfilled. However, the latter refers to “as learners reflect upon their own TL use, their output serves as metalinguistic function, enabling them to control and internalize linguistic knowledge” (Swain, 1995, p. 126). In brief, output production is crucial because it does not only allow students to reveal their hypothesis, but also to consider and use them in real contexts. “Reflection on language may deepen the learners’ awareness of forms, rules, and form-function relationships if the context of production is communicative in nature” (Izumi, 2003, p. 170)

7. Research method

The research I used while collecting data by testing 70 students at all belongs to the area of educational research, its main purpose is to examine behavioral patterns in students and teachers. In this specific occasion, the analysis is going to be focalized on the students so as to verify whether or not learners consider output and interaction key elements to acquire a second language. When dealing with educational research, two essential aspects should be taken into consideration; qualitative research and quantitative research.

The former is used to acquire knowledge about people's attitudes, behavioral patterns, motivations and lifestyles while the latter relies on statistics or number. For this purpose, there are various ways of collecting data for further analysis such as: interviews, observations, field notes and questionnaires for the participants due to the fact that smaller and specific samples are needed in qualitative research. This is the main reason why I have chosen this particular approach for collecting data to the students. I prepared a questionnaire where students were asked about their perception of output and interaction using English not only in class but also in their daily life. (See Appendix A). The respondents are divided into two main groups, the first one corresponds to 45 students who belong to the fourth course of Compulsory Secondary Education in the Spanish educational system. The second group corresponds to 25 undergraduate students at Jaen University.

8. Results

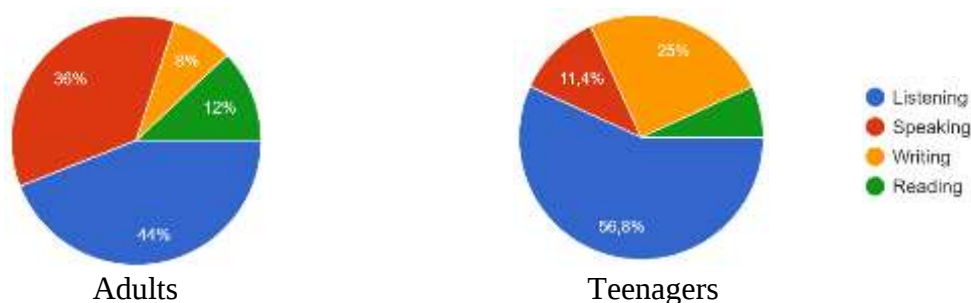
8.1 Learners define their experience learning English



As we can observe in the graphs, most of the students define their experience of learning English as “Buena” becoming this option the most prominent among both groups. For instance; 53.8 % of the adults selected this definition because of their past memories with different teachers during their learning process. Similarly, 63.6% of

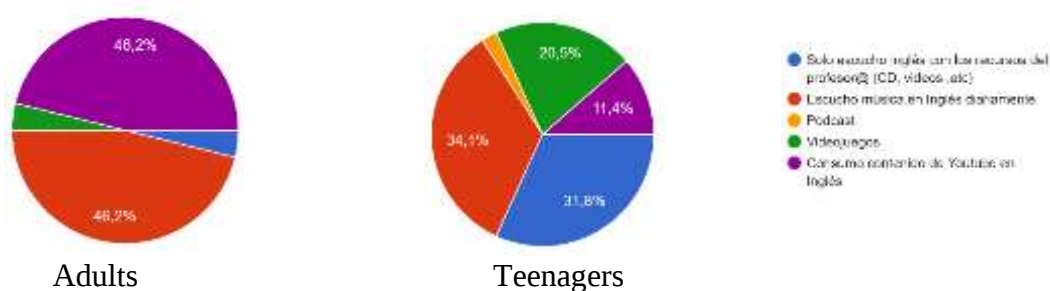
Teenagers opted for choosing “buena” which means a lot in terms of improvement in the education system to boost English language acquisition. Notwithstanding, it also should be noted the dissatisfaction reflected on the graphs in the choices “regular” and “mala”. For instance, 11,5% of the adults responded “regular” and 7.7% indicated “mala”, reasons may vary from person to person but we will understand them in depth in the following questions. On the other hand, 25% of the teenagers went for “regular”, but none of them selected the option “mala”, which shows not only the students’ effort to acquire a second language but also teachers’ effort to teach the subject more interactively so as to make the acquisition more pleasant

8.2 Most complicated skills to improve



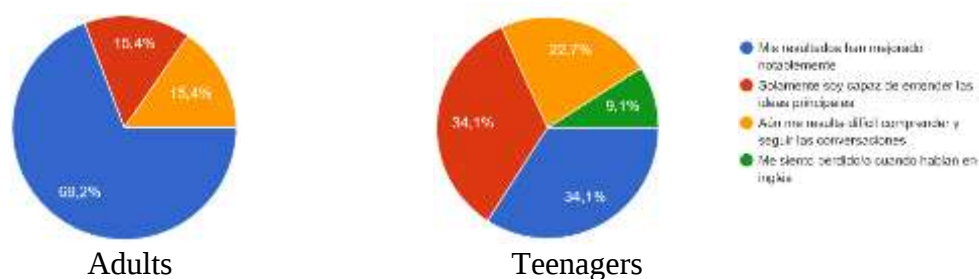
In this question, I asked learners which language skills are more difficult to improve for them so as to make a correlation with the role of input, output and interaction in their acquisition. In both groups, the most complicated skill was listening. For example, 44% of the adults selected this option as well as the 56.8% of the teenagers. In terms of speaking, 36% of the adults chose this skill, conversely, only 11.4% of the teenagers selected speaking as the trickiest one. With regards to writing, 25% of the teenagers opted for writing arguing the lack of linguistic tools in their textual production. Nevertheless, only 8% of the adults found difficult to improve writing. In the case of reading, 12% of the adults and 6.8% of the teenagers selected this alternative asserting that the lack of awareness in English pronunciation make them feel unconfident to read in public.

8.3 Listening in their daily life



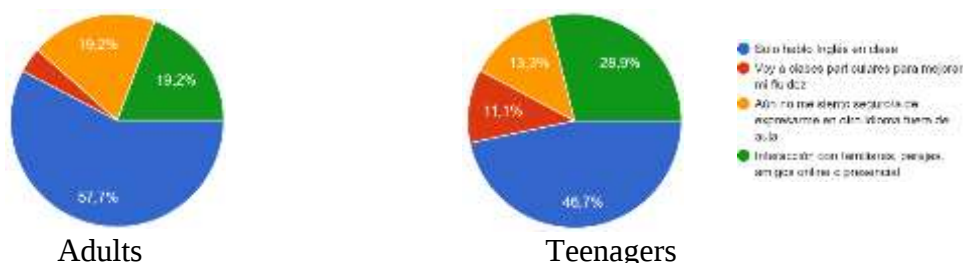
In this observation, students were asked to indicate their relationship with the “listening” outside the classroom. English music was the most common choice among learners in both groups. For instance, 46.2% of adults chose this option as the main contact with the L2 in real world outside their educative environment, comparable to the 34.1% of those teenagers who also selected this one. Similarly, YouTube with a 46.2% of the adults and 11.4% of teenagers along with videogames with a 3.6% of adults and 20.5% of teenagers have a direct impact during the learning process because technology has favoured other entertained ways to receive input in English. However, it is relevant to mention that 31,8% of the teenagers only listen the L2 in class with their teachers. This attitude could be associated with the apathy in relation to the L2 or the lack of interest because in comparison with adults, this option is inexistent due to the demand that is required, academically speaking, at that stage. Finally, the presence of “podcast” is almost nonexistent with a 2.3% of the teenagers and zero in the case of adults, this effect is associated with the appearance of streaming platform and Youtube where you are not only invited to listening them live and direct but also to watch and comment immediately.

8.4 Learner’s listening habits reflected on their academic results



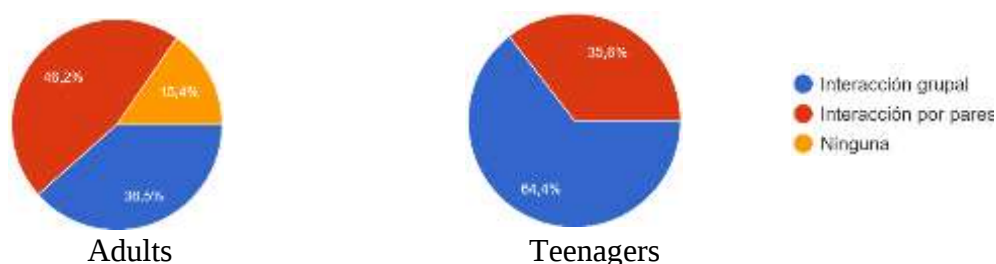
These graphs show whether or not learner’s listening habit using the L2 have a direct impact on their proficiency. For instance, 69.2% of the adults responded that their academic results have improved notably and 34.1% of the teenagers suggested the same. In relation to the second option, 34.1% of teenagers claimed that they are only able to understand the main ideas in listening activities, parallel with the 15.4% of the adults. The third alternative seems the more controversial because 15.4% of the adults and 22.7% of the teenagers find difficult to understand and follow conversations in class despite of the input which they receive outside the classroom along with the 9.15 % of teenagers who feel lost when English is spoken in class.

8.5 Use of the L2 outside the classroom



These graphs are quite revealing in term of language acquisition because it allows us to link learner's behavioral patterns and their L2 proficiency. 57.7% of adults and 46.7% of teenagers only speak English in their sessions which is quite surprising due to the infinite alternatives that can be found surfing on internet as those 19.2% of adults and 28.9% of teenagers who take advantage of the online and offline world to use the L2. Moreover, it should be noted that 11.1% of teenagers and 3.8 % of adults go to private lessons so as to improve their fluency. Lastly, 19.2% of adults and 13.3% of teenagers do not feel confidence to use the L2 outside their class because they do not know how to structure some grammatical sentences orally.

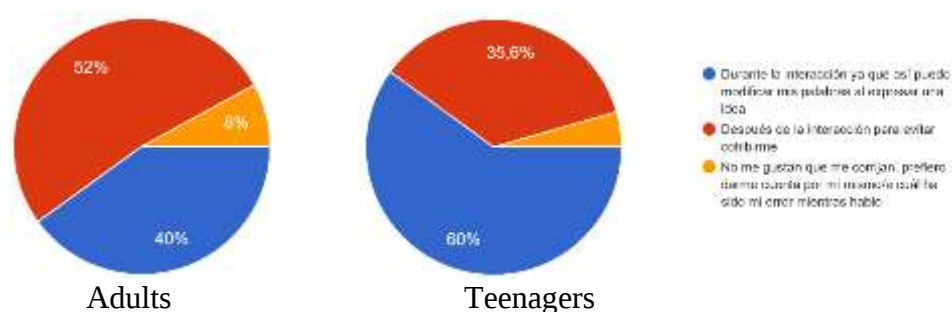
8.6 Favourite interaction type in classroom



This observation is focused on learner's preferences to determine which type of interaction they feel more comfortable with. Moreover, plenty of comments were added to justify their choices. As a result, interaction in groups was the most popular option among both respondents because 46.2% of the adults and 64.4% of teenagers selected this type arguing constantly that “Cuanta más gente participe en la actividad, habrá más variedad de ideas y el debate durará más” or “Al tener que participar varias personas en un grupo, es más fácil perder la vergüenza o timidez y también se puede aprender del

resto de compañeros”. Notwithstanding, interaction in pairs played also an interesting role in their choices as in the case of 38.5% adults who suggested that “si es grupal, algunos participantes hablaran menos que otros, por eso prefiero en pareja” and “Más dinámico y personal por parejas. Hay más interacción en menos tiempo y menos intimidante”. Similarly, 35.6% of the teenagers pointed out that “por grupos no trabajan todos por par se trabaja mejor” and “por parejas es como se interactua mejor, se mantiene una conversación y se mejora más fluidez y confianza”. Finally, some learners decided to select none of them because they prefer oral presentations to interact with the whole class.

8.7 Student's preferences for oral corrective feedback



When dealing with the use of different types of corrective feedback, the concepts “how” and “when” are essential during their implementation. That is why learners were asked to respond whether or not they like to be corrected while they are producing the language, or once their utterances were finished. Alternatively, some learners opted for not being corrected at all because they prefer to realize by themselves about their mistakes. In brief, 40% of adults and 60% of teenagers were in favour of receiving corrective feedback during the interaction. However, 52% of adults and 35.6% of teenagers express that after the interaction was a better option so as to avoid feeling inhibited. Finally, only 8% of adults and 4.4% of teenagers asserted that they do not like to be corrected.

8.8 Explicit vs Implicit Corrective feedback

<i>Adults</i>	<i>Teenagers</i>
Explicit: 6	Explicit: 15
Implicit: 18	Implicit: 30

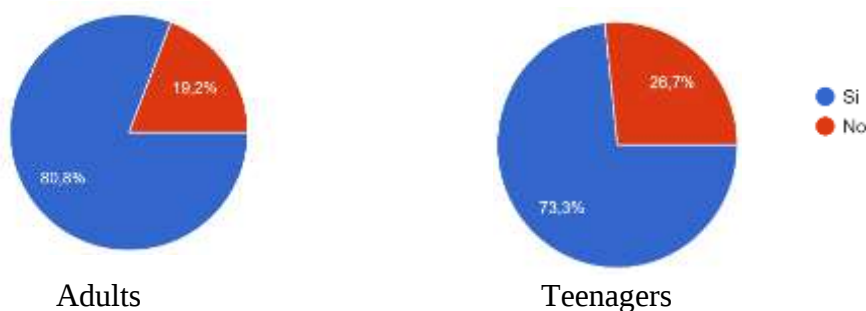
In this part of the questionnaire, learners were asked to decide either they like explicit corrective feedback or implicit based on their experiences in classroom. 6 adults and 15 teenagers among the respondents suggested that explicit feedback was the best type and provided some reasons to support their choice:

- ECF allows to realize the error immediately
- ECF allows to retain the correct form instantly
- ECF permit to internalize the information autonomously

However, there were many students who considered the opposite, specifically, 18 adults and 30 teenagers responded in the questionnaire that implicit corrective feedback is the most appropriate type for correcting errors. They asserted that:

- ICF lets students to think and give them the opportunity to reformulate their answers
- ICF lets students to notice the errors by themselves
- ICF helps to find new ways to convey our utterances
- ICF is more beneficial for shy, unconfident who have difficulties with the L2

8.9 Feelings with their English current level



With regards to the last part of the questionnaire, learners were asked to respond whether or not they were happy with the current English level. Surprisingly, 80.8% of

the adults as well as 73.3% of teenagers answer positively. Nonetheless, 19.2 % of adults and 26.7% recognized that they were not satisfied with their current level.

9. Analysis of the data based on the literature

Comments are interesting specially those who came from younger generations because they will allow us to understand deeply whether or not output and interaction play a central role in their SLA. Furthermore, it is a well-known fact that children have more possibilities to acquire a second language when they start absorbing it consciously or subconsciously during their childhood. However, it is interesting to notice how learners express, in the section devoted to the analysis of their listening habits, that despite of receiving input in the L2 daily, 65.9% of them are still struggling with listening and some of them feel “lost” or find “difficult” to follow conversations. These comments are connected with Swain (1985) statements who suggested that receiving only input was not sufficient to acquire a second language properly because output play also an essential role to consolidate the previous linguistic knowledge.

With regards to output, in the section dedicated to the use of L2 outside the classroom was surprising to observe that the majority of learners only speak English in class due to lack of opportunities outside or because they feel unconfident to use the second language. These feelings can be solved when learners, specially, low level learners are pushed to use the L2 as Nubuyoshi and Ellis (1993) assert “pushing learners to improve the accuracy of their production results not only in immediate improved performance but also in gains accuracy over time” (p. 249)

Given the nature of corrective feedback, students were asked to decide either explicit feedback or explicit feedback was appropriate for them. Undoubtedly, both groups were in favour of implicit feedback arguing that it is more beneficial and less intimidating for them to receive corrective feedback in that way. Similarly, Haswell (1983) states that “implicit feedback not only guides learners to independently solve the problem, but also build up their agency and enables them to take more responsibility for their own grammatical errors” (p.184).

10. Conclusion

This dissertation explored the importance of output and interaction based on the most well-known theories respectively highlighting their main contributions in the SLA field, which are not only facilitating the correct development of the L2 proficiency but also in terms of advantages for learners who struggle with communicative issues. Feedback, different types of negotiation of meaning and, most importantly, negotiation of form have been covered so as to facilitate a general view of these aspects which are helpful and constantly used during the L2 acquisition. In fact, teachers can implement these linguistic tools on their daily lessons so as to encourage student's participation and help them to improve fluency and accuracy.

Moreover, learners provided essential information to reach the conclusion that regardless of your daily habits outside the classroom input by itself is necessary but not sufficient to expand your L2 knowledge because they have to experience the gap between what they know and what they do not know and the only way to achieve that effect is thorough the production of language "output" and the interaction with their classmates, English native speakers or competent ones. Finally, implicit corrective feedback is the most popular among the survey respondents because it does not only allow learners to feel less inhibited but also increases the chances to build a better work environment with teachers.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

1. ¿Cómo definirías tu experiencia aprendiendo inglés?

- ☐ Muy buena
- ☐ Buena
- ☐ Regular
- ☐ Mala

2. ¿Qué es lo que más te ha costado mejorar?

- ☐ Listening
- ☐ Speaking
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Reading

3. ¿Cómo es tu experiencia con el “listening” fuera del aula?

- ☐ Solo escucho inglés con los recursos del profesor(a) (CD, videos ...etc)
- ☐ Escucho música en inglés diariamente
- ☐ Podcast
- ☐ Videojuegos
- ☐ Consumo Contenido de Youtube en inglés

4. Haciendo esto, ¿Cuáles son tus resultados en las actividades de “listening”?

- ☐ Mis resultados han mejorado notablemente
- ☐ Solamente soy capaz de entender las ideas principales
- ☐ Aún me resulta difícil comprender y seguir las conversaciones
- ☐ Me siento perdido/a cuando hablan en inglés

5. ¿Cómo es tu experiencia con el "Speaking" fuera del aula?

- ☐ Solo hablo inglés en clase
- ☐ Voy a clases particulares para mejorar mi fluidez
- ☐ Aún no me siento seguro/a de expresarme en otro idioma fuera del aula
- ☐ Interacción con familiares, parejas, amigos online o presencial

6. ¿Qué tipo de actividades prefieres para trabajar el "speaking" en clase?

- ☐ Interacción grupal
- ☐ Interacción por pares
- ☐ Ninguna

7. Explica las razones de tu elección

8. ¿De qué forma prefieres que te corrijan al hablar inglés?

- ☐ Durante la interacción ya que así puedo modificar mis palabras al expresar una idea
- ☐ Después de la interacción para evitar cohibirme
- ☐ No me gustan que me corrijan, prefiero darme cuenta por mi mismo/a cuál ha sido mi error mientras hablo

9. ¿Piensas que es positivo o negativo que te corrijan cuando estás hablando en inglés? ¿Por qué?

10. ¿Prefieres una corrección directa o indirecta? ¿Por qué?

I visit Rome yesterday

Directa: No, te has confundido/equivocado se dice "_____"

Indirecta: Quieres decir: ___/ ¿Estás seguro?, Prueba una vez más a reformular la frase

11. ¿Estás satisfecho/a con el nivel que has adquirido hasta ahora?

- ☐ Si
- ☐ No