

Spanish Graduate Instructors' In-Class Cognition and Feedback Provision over Time

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1. Introduction

The study presented here is part of a longitudinal project examining graduate instructor cognition and in-class behavior regarding aspects of interaction believed to affect SLA. While the larger project examines cognition and behavior regarding tasks, input, interaction, output, and learner modified output, this manuscript will center on a representative sample of the feedback data. In particular, the study presented here examines (1) what percentage of errors are corrected by graduate student instructors in non-experimental, 50-minute university-level Spanish foreign language (FL) lessons, (2) how these instructors make feedback decisions, in particular which factors they take into account when making these decisions, and (3) if these aspects are consistent over time, or if there are observable differences in graduate instructor cognition and/or behavior regarding feedback over consecutive semesters.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Theoretical Background

Both the study reported here and the larger project are motivated by existing research on teacher cognition and interaction-based classroom second language acquisition (SLA). In the area of teacher cognition, studies have focused on (a) instructor in-class cognition, either alone or in relation to instructor-initiated behavior such as lesson planning, or (b) examinations of instructors' reaction to learner behavior such as lack of participation (for a review of this research, cf. Borg, 2006). Teacher cognition research provides us with valuable information regarding the underlying cognitive processes motivating instructor behavior. Rather than relying on the researcher's interpretations and hypotheses as to why instructors make certain decisions in the observable classroom behavior, research on teacher cognition examines instructor thought processes, most often retrospectively, via teaching journals, questionnaires, open-ended interviews, or stimulated recall protocols. In stimulated recalls, for example, instructors can be shown parts of a video of a class they just taught, and be asked to explain what they were thinking at the time of the original interaction. Researchers can then zoom in on the research focus of the study, be it deviating from the lesson plan, classroom management, grammar teaching, etc., and uncover what motivated instructor behavior during language lessons. Traditionally, teacher cognition research has not considered factors believed to mediate SLA, such as feedback.

Interaction-based instructed SLA research, on the other hand, by definition focuses on interactional features believed to mediate SLA, including feedback. While largely held that oral corrective feedback can and often does promote SLA (cf. Li, 2010; Lyster & Saito, 2010; Mackey & Goo, 2007), we also understand, primarily from experimental and quasi-experimental settings, that many factors can mediate these beneficial effects, including but not limited to the amount of feedback provided. When undertaken in classroom contexts, feedback research most often centers on observable behavior from language lessons (e.g., what types of feedback are given to learners; what learners do with that feedback; for an example see Lyster & Mori, 2006). It has also examined feedback in relation to learner performance data (e.g., if feedback leads to more learning of a linguistic structure; see review by Lyster & Saito, 2010). Studies have demonstrated that feedback, when provided naturally by instructors, is variable both in the type and in amount provided (e.g., Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010,

forthcoming a, d; Li, 2010; Sheen, 2004). A gap unaddressed until recently is research examining why instructor feedback provision is so variable in foreign language classrooms. We do not yet understand how instructors make their feedback decisions, if this provision is consistent over time and, most importantly, what this variation could mean for instructed SLA given what we know about the mediated effects of corrective feedback.

Theoretically, feedback is believed to be beneficial for SLA for several reasons. First, it alerts learners that something in their speech is not target-like. Second, it draws their attention to the mismatch between the learner's speech and the target structure. And third, feedback is often provided when learners are already engaged in meaningful interaction, giving them opportunities to incorporate the new information into their interlanguage and, ultimately, their language production. From an interaction-based perspective (e.g., Gass, 2003; Gass & Mackey, 2007; Hatch, 1978; Long, 1996; Pica, 1994; Schmidt, 2001; Swain, 2005), the lack of research on instructor feedback decisions is surprising when one looks closely at the theoretical underpinnings of the construct of feedback. Under the interaction approach, the interlocutor (the communicative partner) is believed to be a key individual in SLA, providing input, feedback, and opportunities for negotiation for meaning and modified output (cf. Long, 1996), factors that are seen as critical for language learning. As has been argued recently (Gurzynski-Weiss, 2013), the instructor-as-interlocutor within the language classroom plays an even more pivotal role where learning opportunities are limited, often restricted to a few 50-75 minute lessons per week. This is especially the case in FL contexts, where the classroom can be learners' only exposure to, and interaction with, the language. With limited exceptions, how and why instructors make their feedback decisions, and instructor feedback provision over time, is still largely unattested empirically.

2.2. Previous Research on Instructor Cognition in Relation to Feedback

The limited research on instructor cognition regarding feedback provision has demonstrated how cognition changes as a result of training, and it also reveals potential relationships between instructor cognition and in-class factors believed to affect SLA. For example, in a 2004 study, Mackey, Polio, and McDonough examined instructors' thoughts about and provision of feedback in relation to their participation in a feedback workshop. In their study, inexperienced English as a second language (ESL) instructors were videotaped teaching two lessons prior to and following a workshop on feedback. The instructors transcribed the classroom interactions and reflected on their feedback techniques. While the researchers found that instructor feedback provision did not significantly change, their awareness of feedback and thoughts about whether or not to provide it increased as a result of the workshop. Also in the ESL context, Polio, Gass, and Chapin (2006) examined instructor feedback provided when instructor/student pairs completed an information-gap task. Afterwards, the instructors were asked to participate in a stimulated recall interview, in which they reflected on interaction episodes that contained feedback. The researchers compared instructor cognition and feedback in relation to their teaching experience: 11 of the instructors had not taught before, and eight were experienced, both in terms of education (possessing a Masters degree related to teaching) and classroom experience (ranging from 4-27 years). While Polio et al. did not find the difference in feedback provision to be related to instructor experience, they did find instructor cognition to differ according to experience. Less experienced instructors reported thinking more about the logistics of a task and their (lack of) preparation, whereas the more experienced instructors focused on the learners' performance in relation to their role as instructors. This was found in the behavioral data as well: more experienced instructors elicited more student speech during the interactions as compared to their less experienced counterparts. As student output is believed by many to be a necessary component to language learning (cf. Swain, 2005), this result has both practical and theoretical implications. In these two English-language settings, while there were not significant differences in terms of the amount and type of feedback provided, there were differences in instructor cognition and, in the case of the Polio et al. (2006) study, learners' resulting behavior. Importantly, in both of these studies the instructors interacted with students who were not their own, and delivered lessons pre-prepared for them (in the case of Mackey et al., 2004) or carried out brief, researcher-designed information-gap tasks (in Polio et al., 2006). Thus, while these studies provide valuable insight into instructor cognition and behavior regarding feedback, their extension to natural, non-experimental language classrooms is limited.

Gurzynski-Weiss extended this line of research to the Spanish FL setting, and targeted instructor cognition and feedback provision in natural, intact classroom lessons. In these studies (Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010, forthcoming a, b, c) data were collected from 60 instructors from five universities in the DC-area. All were teaching university-level FL Spanish in communicative language teaching-based programs. The dataset, which included 60 fifty-minute grammar-focused lessons (video and audio-recorded), 32 stimulated recalls focusing on student errors and instructor oral corrective feedback, and 60 background and belief questionnaires, revealed that instructor cognition and feedback provision varied greatly both in type and amount, and was significantly related to instructor native or nonnative language background, language teaching experience, and SLA education. Particularly relevant for the present study was the fact that, in this earlier research, instructors' stimulated recall comments focused largely on how their feedback provision and in-class reflection of student errors changed over time, most often within the first seven years of teaching.

Instructors in Gurzynski-Weiss (2010, forthcoming a, b, c) cited several factors as causes for this change. The first was their increasing experience with teaching. One instructor with 12 years of experience reported, "Now [feedback provision] comes automatically. A few years ago I was thinking about it. I think there's been an evolution. I have gone from being very explicit to very implicit to finding a balance between the two" (Gurzynski-Weiss, forthcoming b). Another instructor with 35 years of experience said, "I've seen it all before. I pretty much know what's coming. Every now and then a student has a mistake I didn't foresee but other than that I don't reflect much" (Gurzynski-Weiss, forthcoming b). Others cited their knowledge of SLA research (their graduate preparation and/or current research projects) as reason why their cognition about and provision of feedback had changed. One first-year PhD student stated, "I think reading the [SLA] research has really helped me become more aware of what I'm doing in the classroom and how I'm correcting...I think it makes me correct less" (Gurzynski-Weiss, forthcoming b). Another, a second-year PhD student, said that the SLA-education made her correct less as it complicated her decision-making. For one error, for example, this particular instructor said that when she had taught public school she would have corrected the error, but after a certain SLA course, she saw feedback as much more complicated, citing factors such as learner anxiety, type of linguistic structure, type of task, learner gender, class dynamic, etc., as factors motivating her decision to not correct. It is perhaps intuitive that graduate student instructors would be a promising population with whom to begin longitudinal research on feedback, given how they are often at the earlier part of their teaching careers, are simultaneously taking courses, refining their research ideas, working closely with course supervisors and language program directors to adjust their approaches to teaching and, undoubtedly for some, their views of language learning. While informative as to how and why instructors give feedback, the data from this previous research were unable to verify if these changes during graduate preparation did or did not occur as reported.

With the exception of the few discussed above, studies have yet to examine if instructor feedback patterns are consistent over time. If instructor feedback provision does in fact change, we do not know if this transformation happens first cognitively, and then in behavior, or if this happens simultaneously in cognition and behavior; nor do we understand what factors incite change. Most importantly, we do not know if potentially variable feedback provision could impact classroom SLA. Given the dynamic of university-level FL classes in the United States that are taught largely by graduate instructors, the paucity of longitudinal empirical investigations of naturally occurring feedback in language classrooms (particularly non-English FL classrooms), and the results from earlier research pointing to education and experience as factors inciting change reported in both cognition and behavior, the present study sought to examine graduate instructors' decision-making about, and provision of, feedback in non-experimental classes over time.

3. Motivation for Current Study and Research Questions

The present study set out to examine graduate instructor feedback provision over the course of several semesters. Specifically, this study investigated if the amount of feedback that graduate instructors provide—and the factors they take into account when making feedback-related decisions—are consistent when comparing lessons in consecutive semesters. The research questions guiding this study were as follows:

- RQ 1: What percentage of learner errors do graduate instructors of university-level FL Spanish correct during a 50-minute lesson? Is this consistent between semesters?
- RQ 2: Which factors do graduate instructors take into account when making feedback decisions during class time? Are the factors cited consistent between semesters?

Due to the lack of previous research on the topic in this context, the null hypotheses were tested.

4. Methods

4.1. Data Site

Data were collected in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at a large, public, Midwestern research university. This particular department follows the communicative language teaching approach and has more than 90 masters and doctoral graduate instructors teaching all levels of Spanish language, in addition to introductory courses on culture, literature, and linguistics. The graduate instructors, who teach as part of their fellowship, are required to enroll in the departmental teaching methods course during their first semester teaching and typically teach three courses per academic year. Graduate instructors who teach beginning and intermediate language courses are provided power points to utilize or edit for their lessons; these instructors are also required to use the same syllabus, in-class writing assignments, and exams. This consistency in materials is meant to further standardize the various sections of a given language class. In lieu of a traditional workbook, students in this program complete daily work online where they are given computer-generated feedback. When teaching advanced or content courses in this department (opportunities awarded to those with outstanding records of teaching, as measured by student and course supervisor evaluations), graduate instructors assist in editing an existing syllabus and often create their own lessons and exams. This contextual information is important to highlight, as it differs from previous research where instructors controlled lessons and feedback on daily work at each level (Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010, forthcoming a, b, c, d) or taught researcher-prepared lessons (Mackey et al., 2004).

4.2. Participants

The longitudinal project has thus far taken place over three semesters (fall 2011, spring 2012, fall 2012). A case study of eight of the 14 participants' feedback provision will be reported here. Three of the eight participant instructors have been videotaped for three consecutive semesters, with the remaining five videotaped two semesters in a row. Three participants are male and five are female. Three are graduate students of literature, while five study linguistics. At the time of the fall 2012 data collection, the range of their teaching experiences was 5-14 years.

4.3. Materials and Procedure

Graduate instructor participants were recruited via an email sent to all Masters and doctoral students teaching in the department. Those who responded were emailed consent forms and a link to an electronic background questionnaire, and asked for their current syllabi, the latter which was requested again at the beginning of each semester. One lesson of each instructor was videotaped per semester, via a Kodak Zi8 digital camera on a tripod at the back of the classroom. The researcher and research assistant were not present during the lesson recording. Most lessons were 50 minutes in length; in the case of the two 75-minute lessons, only data from the first 50 minutes of the class were utilized to ensure comparability. As soon as possible after teaching, the instructor and the researcher or researcher assistant met for a stimulated recall (SR) protocol (cf. Gass & Mackey, 2000). This occurred usually later the same day, or at the very latest the following morning. Importantly, the SR was always conducted prior to the instructor teaching again.

Each protocol focused on instances of student error-instructor response (if any) for up to ten student errors (out of an average 12.5 per 50-minute lesson). An example of a feedback episode presented to a graduate instructor can be seen in (1).

(1) Student: "Busco **uno** artista que pinte una obra de arte."

I look for an artist that paints a work of art.

Instructor: "Muy bien. Buscas un artista que pinte una obra de arte."

Very good. You look for an artist that paints a work of art.

This example shown to the instructor contained the following error: When an indefinite masculine article directly precedes a noun in Spanish, it should be *un*, not *uno*, as the student stated. As seen in (1), the instructor recasted a correction.

At the end of each SR, general questions were asked of the instructor about their feedback provision, what they usually thought about during class, etc. The complete list of questions can be seen in the Appendix. Due to the longitudinal nature of the study, and the attempt to minimize the participation burden on the graduate instructors, no distractor items (i.e., items not addressing a feedback episode in class) were included in the SRs.

Originally the researcher attempted to record only grammar lessons to facilitate comparisons with the earlier dataset, but this proved possible only for the beginning and intermediate language courses. By the second or third semester, many of the graduate instructors were teaching advanced courses such as literature, culture, and linguistics. For these more advanced content courses, the researcher chose to record days that had introductions to topics (e.g., sociolinguistics, poetry), or discussions, where it was assumed the instructor would provide more feedback than on days such as student presentations, etc.

4.4. Coding and Analysis

The classroom recordings were coded for both student error and instructor feedback. Student errors were coded for phonology, lexis, morphosyntax, semantics, unsolicited use of the L1, and incorrect answer. Instructor corrective feedback was coded as explicit (for metalinguistic explanation, overt correction, and elicitations) or implicit (for all other types of feedback). See Gurzynski-Weiss (forthcoming a) for an operationalization and example of each error and feedback type from a comparable dataset.

For the SR data, the researcher tallied all reported factors that were reasons for which the graduate instructor did or did not provide feedback. These factors were coded as learner-internal (such as anxiety level, motivation, etc.) or learner-external factors (such as timing within the lesson, instructor knowledge or preparation, learner participation thus far in this class, etc.); these categories emerged naturally from the dataset. Example (2) presents an instructor SR quote that contains a learner-external factor, instructor knowledge.

(2) Instructor: "Well at first I was nervous because I...don't know what it's called where you put the disc in, uh, in the computer."

In (3), on the other hand, is an example where the instructor focused on learner-internal factors, specifically the learner's knowledge and communicative intention.

(3) Instructor: "He was trying to get the right form. I thought he was he had it on the tip of his tongue, he just needed a little help."

5. Results

5.1. Research Question 1: Percentage of Errors Corrected

The first research question examined the recorded classroom data to determine the percentage of errors that graduate instructors corrected during a 50-minute Spanish FL lesson, and if that percentage was consistent when compared between consecutive semesters. Results, presented in Table 1, demonstrate wide variation both within and between graduate instructors. Due to the modest sample size of the current study, results are presented as percentages and differences, when present, are not claimed to be significant.

Table 1. *Recorded Classroom Data*

P	Sem. #1	Lesson focus	Fdbk/ Errors	Sem. #2	Lesson focus	Fdbk/ Errors	Sem. #3	Lesson focus	Fdbk/ Errors
1	Int.	preterit vs. imperfect	43%	Int.	imperfect subjunctive	65%	Int.	subjunctive	80%
2	Beg.	preterit vs. imperfect	69%	Beg.	present progressive; imperfect	70%			
6	Int.	preterit vs. imperfect	81%	Int.	indicative vs. subjunctive	71%			
7	Int.	subjunctive	100%	Int.	indicative vs. subjunctive	40%	Int.	subjunctive	44%
8	Adv.	movie discussion	43%	Adv.	story discussion	56%	Adv.	sociolinguistics	60%
11				Beg.	reflexives and reciprocals	80%	Int.	subjunctive	100%
13				Int.	si clauses	44%	Adv.	story discussion	88%
14	Beg.	pronouns	67%	Int.	subjunctive	75%			

Patterns within each participant's data set (e.g., the percentage of errors that the same graduate instructor corrected when videotaped in consecutive semesters) revealed interesting trends. Some instructors, such as Participants 2, 6, 8, and 14, remained relatively consistent over time in terms of the amount of feedback provided. While Participant 2 taught the same course both semesters, correcting 69% and 70% of errors, Participant 6 taught the same level of Spanish language and corrected 81% and 71% of errors, respectively. While Participant 8 changed language level, he was relatively consistent in the percentage of errors corrected over three semesters, 43%, 56%, and 60%, although he also gradually increased in the amount of errors he corrected over time; Participant 14 was also quite consistent, correcting 67% when recorded teaching the beginning level and 75% in the intermediate level the following semester.

Other graduate instructors, such as Participants 1, 7, and 13, differed greatly in the percentage of errors they corrected over time. Participant 1 changed courses over three semesters and went from correcting 43% of errors, to 65%, and then 80%. Participant 7, who taught not only the same course, but was recorded on the same day of the syllabus, varied considerably between semesters, correcting 100% of learners' errors the first semester recorded, and then dropping to 40% and 44%. Participant 13 corrected twice as many errors in the second class that was recorded, 88% compared to 44%, but also changed courses. As seen in the Table, Participant 11 was in between these two extremes: he increased his correction from 80% to 100%, while also changing from the beginning level to intermediate.

When comparing the data between instructors, there were even more notable differences, even when the same courses and same lessons were recorded. Participants 1 and 6 were recorded teaching the same course and the same day on the syllabus in the fall of 2011, yet corrected 43% and 81% of

errors, respectively. Participants 6 and 7 taught the same course and same topic in the spring of 2012, and corrected 71% and 40% of errors, respectively. Recall that these graduate instructors were all provided the same power point lesson plans to utilize in class, largely standardizing the tasks and activities, and providing support that the difference in error correction can be attributed to the individual instructor.

Thus, for this first research question, considerable variation was found in the percentage of errors corrected by graduate instructors, both for individual instructors over time, and in between-instructor comparisons, as well.

5.2. *Research Question 2: Factors Motivating Error Correction*

Next, the SR data were examined to determine which factors graduate instructors cited as motivation for why they did or did not provide feedback for learner errors. Recall that these factors were subsequently categorized as learner-internal (e.g., ability, perceived intention, etc.) and learner-external (timing within the lesson, instructor preparation, etc.). General trends across instructors are reported first, followed by an examination of the trends within participant data over time.

Overall, what factors motivated graduate instructors to correct their students? The most common learner-internal factor cited as motivation for why feedback was provided was the learner's intended meaning. In other words, the instructor intuited that the learner's intended communication differed from what was conveyed. For example, one instructor reflected on a learner's incorrect choice of conjugating saying, "[That student] was conjugating *yo* for *él*." In other words, the learner chose the first person conjugation instead of the third person, which was interfering with her intended meaning. Additional learner-internal factors cited included learner anxiety level and learners' lack of knowledge of the target linguistic structure.

With respect to learner-external factors, instructors most commonly cited that the error was something the learners would be tested on, and that there was no time for the error to "work itself out." Instructors also cited the saliency of an error, stating that for non-salient errors, they felt it was their duty as the instructor to heighten learners' awareness of the mistake. For example, several cited the need to correct learners' pronunciation of the /h/ sound, which does not exist in Spanish. One said,

“[Pronouncing the /h/ sound is] a mistake that [the students] make a lot. And I think especially the silent h's can inhibit comprehension by people who aren't used to talking to native English speakers in Spanish so that's something that I try to focus on.”

Instructors also cited the fact that a structure had already been taught as motivation for correction, stating that learners “should know [a target structure] by now.” Finally, instructors cited their own lack of preparation and knowledge as a reason why they did not correct certain errors. In general, the graduate instructors in the current study cited more learner-external than internal factors when determining whether or not to correct learner errors, focusing often on the departmental and course requirements and their own knowledge and experience (or lack thereof).

Instructors cited similar factors as reasons why they did not correct errors. The most common learner-internal factor was the instructor's perception of the learner's utterance as a mistake, not an error. In other words, the instructor believed that the learner knew the correct answer, via prior performance on an assessment or in-class task, and simply made a mistake at the time of speaking during the recorded class. Instructors were also confident that some learners would simply not benefit from feedback, either due to the students' (instructor-perceived) low motivation, or due to the fact that the instructor perceived them as not being developmentally ready to acquire a certain structure. One instructor stated, “Yeah [that student] makes a ton of errors and for that [error], I just knew feedback wouldn't make a difference, honestly.”

With respect to learner-external factors, the graduate instructors in this study were concerned that correcting would inhibit learner participation, which they all reported as quite low. One instructor said, “[What the student said] was not really correct, but I appreciated her participating.” Instructors also were preoccupied with the amount of time given to cover certain linguistic structures, stating that with

the amount they needed to cover on the syllabus and in the prepared lessons, they had to pick and choose their feedback wisely or risk falling behind the department guidelines: “At this point in the semester there's a lot of making sure they're aware of how the exam is going to work. We just had to keep moving.” Instructors also commented on their own preparation, voicing concern that they were not prepared to address a certain error, worried that they would not be able to explain why it was wrong, other than the fact that it sounded nonnative: “Sometimes I don't always know the vocab they need.” Finally, instructors frequently cited learners' prior performance on a recent assessment as reason why they did not correct what they perceived to be a mistake, rather than a serious error: “[That student] knew that [structure]. I knew he knew it because I just gave back their test.”

Examining the types of factors cited as motivation for and against feedback provision over time proved to be informative, as each graduate student mentioned the same 3-4 factors every semester they participated in a SR. For example, one instructor cited learner developmental readiness each time. Another, a fear for inhibiting learner participation, while a third was concerned about the target structure of the day, etc. Apart from these within-instructor consistencies, there was also clear evidence that graduate instructors, over time, shifted away from concerns about their competence, their teaching, and time management, to more learner-centered concerns. In the first semester recorded, graduate instructors continuously commented on the need to adhere to the department-wide schedule, and follow the power points they were given. Over time, they became more adept at editing and adapting the department-provided lessons, and knowing what types of items would be assessed, and how. Instructors reported that this increased familiarity with the department structure and in teaching certain structures freed their attention to concentrate more on what learners were producing, rather than what they as the instructor were doing. Instructors' vocabulary also became more specific and refined, using terminology such as “transfer,” “salience,” and “developmental readiness,” as compared to previously reported concepts such as correcting what was perceived as a “big error.” In the earlier semester, when asked to explain what informed their thought processes, graduate instructors, particularly those teaching for the first time, often cited their own language learning experience or intuition, whereas later on instructors cited their increased teaching experience and coursework as motivating a more technical vocabulary.

Thus, for the second research question, graduate instructors demonstrated both consistency and change: each instructor cited 3-4 factors each time as motivation for why they did or did not correct errors, while simultaneously moving away from their own performance as language instructors, and refining their repertoire of terminology to describe in-class phenomena.

6. Discussion

The first research question examined the percentage of errors corrected by graduate instructors during a 50-minute lesson and found variation, both within and between instructor data, in the amount of feedback provided. Some instructors were consistent in the percentage of errors addressed with feedback, despite changes in the level and topic being taught, while others varied greatly. Recall that this project was motivated in large part by instructor comments in a previous Spanish FL dataset (Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010, forthcoming a, b) where participants reported that their feedback provision changed greatly during graduate school and the first few years teaching.

Examining the patterns within instructors (i.e., the data collected from the same instructor in consecutive semesters) revealed interesting trends. The fact that some instructors corrected a similar percentage of errors while others varied greatly at first glance seems challenging to interpret due to potentially intervening variables such as course level, topic, linguistic target, etc. These variables could certainly account for some of the differences observed. However, we also have data where some of the graduate instructors' feedback varied greatly even when teaching the same course and the same topic from one semester to the next. Examining the SR data from these cases, these instructors cited factors such as the class dynamic and individual learner preferences as reasons why they corrected in the ways that they did. For example, Participant 7, who corrected considerably more in the first semester (same course, same linguistic target on syllabus), remarked that the first semester's class dynamic was “very energetic” and that students had “requested feedback,” and for these reasons he frequently provided feedback. In the next semester, when the instructor was observed correcting considerably less, that

same instructor discussed factors such as "shy students," and "low participation" as reasons motivating the lack of error correction. While these comments appear to explain observed patterns, other instructors did not cite factors that could account for the differences between semesters. Some cited the same factors between semesters, while correcting in very different ways, while others reported different factors motivating their decisions while they corrected comparably between semesters. Thus, the data analyzed for this research question from this population are inconclusive, but still add an interesting diachronic component to feedback research, which has been almost entirely synchronic in nature up to this point. It could be that some instructors are correcting in relation to their particular class dynamic, which changes regardless of the course taught each semester, while others correct the same way for a given linguistic target regardless of the course level or of their particular class. With such variation found in the few studies we have, more data must be collected to see if feedback patterns in these recorded lessons are representative of these graduate instructors' cognition and behavior and to explain either (a) why instructors are consistent between semesters, regardless of differing class dynamics, changing courses, and in some cases, even language levels, or (b) if feedback provision changes, how it changes, and what motivates this change.

Let us turn to the differences between instructors. Unlike the previous Spanish FL studies (Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010, forthcoming a, b), where instructors created their own lesson plans and provided feedback on daily work, instructors in the current study who teach the same course shared a syllabus, lesson power points, in-class writing assignments, and assessments provided by the department. The department also provided a daily online component for their students, which included automatized feedback in lieu of a traditional workbook. Despite this homogeneity, there were still notable differences in the percentage of errors corrected by different instructors, even those teaching the same lesson at the same level. In these instances, instructor comments were examined for identifiable explanations of the observed differences. Comparing the data between instructors demonstrated that many graduate instructors cited similar factors as motivating error correction, such as time management and the idea of some errors being more 'important' or 'salient' than others. However, instructors also seemed to have 3-4 factors that they kept citing each semester, while the other factors would change. It is possible that the "instructor-unique" combination of 3-4 factors that determined what instructors were tuning in to during class could have influenced a difference in behavior. Additionally, looking to the previous research on instructor experience, there is also the possibility that these feedback decisions and behavioral variation could in fact be due to differences in the instructors' experience and/or educational background. The range of teaching experience of the current population, between 1-15 years, is a considerable range of time. Many of the instructors in this study were in their first or second years of teaching when the study began, early on in their teaching career and during a time when instructors are believed to be refining aspects of their teaching (cf. Berliner, 1995), including their use of feedback in class (cf. Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010). Examining the patterns in this study, instructor experience was most related to the factors motivating their feedback decisions, rather than the amount of feedback provided. Instructors who had the most experience in this study (15 and 8 years) were much more focused on the linguistic structures and the learners' needs, rather than on their own performance or preparation.

For the second research question, as discussed briefly in the preceding paragraph, results revealed that instructors tended to cite the same 3-4 factors each time they were interviewed as motivation for correcting or not correcting errors during a 50-minute lesson. Over time, instructors appeared to be less concerned with their teaching performance and administrative tasks, such as timing and assessments, and refined their vocabulary when vocalizing in-class factors. With respect to the factors cited by each instructor, when asked what they thought about and why in relation to feedback, many reported that their current research projects and coursework influenced their in-class decisions. For example, a graduate instructor conducting research on the acquisition of certain phonological features of Spanish tended to correct nonnative-like pronunciation errors, which differed from another instructor who specifically said he did not correct phonological errors, focusing instead on lexical or morphosyntactic errors that (in his opinion) interfered more with communication. Another graduate instructor, much like the participants in the previous dataset, cited his coursework in SLA as motivation for why he does not correct much for certain errors, such as gender morphemes, which he explained would be

problematic for most learners for years to come, with or without feedback. It seems logical that graduate instructors have several consistent themes with respect to their feedback provision and do not seem to "reinvent the wheel" so to speak in each given semester (or at least, in the lesson recorded each semester). Perhaps given more time we will consistently see certain factors remain in the forefront of instructors' minds, given their backgrounds and experiences; then again, perhaps not. For example, in the previous dataset, many instructors cited how their feedback provision had evolved to be completely different than when they originally began teaching.

In spite of these consistent factors for each instructor, there was also an overarching tendency for instructors to move away from logistical, administrative, and teacher-centered concerns such as timing within the lesson or impending assessment to more student-centered factors, such as the type of error and the student's ability level. Instructors reported these factors as being related to their increasing confidence and comfort in teaching as time went on. Participants also used a more technical repertoire of vocabulary; instead of "big" errors, instructors described errors as "salient" or "interfering with communicative meaning." When asked about error classification, many again cited their training and experience working with their language supervisors in addition to their graduate coursework as influencing the way they view errors.

So what is the take-away from this modest analysis of graduate instructor cognition about and provision of corrective feedback? Despite the valuable synchronous, one-shot experimental, quasi-experimental, and natural research that we have on feedback in the language classroom, it appears we have been missing a complex part of the picture: how instructors make feedback decisions (e.g., their feedback-related cognition), how this varies between instructors in a given semester, and within instructors over time. While much previous research has speculated why instructors correct the way they do based on lesson recordings, this study adds to the existing research that has investigated instructors' feedback-related cognition (Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010, forthcoming b; Mackey et al., 2004; Polio et al., 2006), demonstrating that even instructors who superficially appear to be correcting consistently and comparably to their colleagues, often provide correction for different reasons. As the majority of undergraduates taking foreign languages in the United States receive the majority of their instruction—and presumably feedback—from limited in-class opportunities controlled by graduate instructors, examining how these instructors provide feedback and how this potentially changes during their formative years is an important and thus far under-researched area of study, for both practical and theoretical reasons.

Feedback in natural language classrooms is a critical type of input and oftentimes what elicits student production of output, both original and modified, which is believed to be theoretically necessary for language learning to occur. As this study has shown, there is large variation in the amount of feedback provided, which could also translate to different opportunities for learners to work with the language. In terms of instructor formation, being aware of what one does in the language classroom, and reflecting on why, is crucial for good habits to form, and earlier work has shown that what instructors believe they do is often very different from what they actually do in the classroom (cf. Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010, forthcoming c).

7. Conclusion and Future Directions

The present study sought to examine graduate instructor cognition and behavior in relation to feedback provision in non-experimental Spanish FL lessons recorded over three consecutive semesters. Results demonstrated differences both within and between graduate student instructors in terms of the amount of feedback they provided to learners in a 50-minute lesson. The study also found that while instructors cited 3-4 factors consistently as reasons why they do or do not provide feedback each semester recorded, there was evidence that instructors also shifted to be more concerned about their students; this was further reflected in a notable difference in terminology. Instructors reported that their experience, education, and ongoing masters and doctoral research projects motivated their cognition and behavior regarding feedback provision in their non-experimental Spanish FL lessons. As this was a first step in examining instructor cognition and behavior regarding feedback over time, opportunities for future research abound.

First, additional studies are needed in both Spanish language classrooms and in other language contexts. Additionally, more in-depth examinations of multiple lessons of instructors each semester would also be advisable, as the current study taped one lesson of each instructor over a modest time period of 2-3 semesters. Future research should also break down the data by linguistic target, to see if instructor cognition and behavior is related to the structure on the syllabus for the day recorded. Focusing on the linguistic structure or target items could also address one of the larger challenges facing this longitudinal research, namely, to determine if there is change or consistency when graduate instructors teach different courses each semester. Though not possible in the modest sample reported here, examining the data in relation to instructor individual characteristics, such as the courses taken, current research projects, and experience, could also prove informative. Additional considerations to take into account include departmental differences and instructor control of the lessons and feedback, as well as the amount of student-produced speech in a given lesson and the number of errors present. For example, it is not the same for an instructor to correct 100% of errors if there are only twelve errors present in a 50-minute class (as was the average in this study), as compared to correcting all 45 errors in a 50-minute class (as found in Gurzynski-Weiss, forthcoming a, for example).

Perhaps the most immediate implication for this research is the need for language instructors, particularly graduate students, to examine the motivations (conscious or unconscious) behind their feedback provision in their natural language classrooms. It would be advisable for teaching methods courses, in addition to discussing the SLA literature on what aspects of interaction mediate SLA, to discuss the role of the instructor in providing key interactional features such as feedback, particularly given the often limited time for learning opportunities in university-level FL classrooms.

This study served as an initial step into examining graduate student instructor cognition and behavior regarding feedback provision in non-experimental classrooms longitudinally. Over time it is the researcher's hope that we have a better understanding of how instructors make feedback decisions and provide feedback over time, if, when, why, and how change occurs in this process, and if these changes impact student perception, use, and uptake of instructor-provided feedback.

Appendix

Stimulated Recall Questions

Instructions (to be read to the participant at the beginning of the session):

What we're going to do now is watch some video-recorded moments from the class you just had. I am going to stop the tape at various points of the lesson and ask you what you were thinking at that time during the class. If you do not remember what you thought at that time, please say so. If there is any time that you would like to stop the tape and comment on something, just let me know. Do you have any questions? Ready to begin?

1. What do you remember thinking at this point during the class?
2. (If applicable) At that moment, did you notice the student error/lack of understanding/etc.?
3. (If yes to #2): At that moment, what did you think of the error/lack of understanding/etc.?
4. (If yes to #2): At that moment, why did you decide to (not) address the error with corrective feedback/act in that particular way?
 - a. At that moment, what made you choose that particular type of feedback for that error?
 - b. If error not addressed with feedback: At that moment, what made you decide to not address that error with feedback?
5. Is there anything else you would like to say about this moment?

At end of the session—

1. Do you think the interaction moments I asked you about were representative of the lesson?

2. Do you think your use of feedback in this lesson is representative of your normal feedback provision? Please explain.
3. Is there anything else you would like to comment on about this lesson or your teaching style in general?
4. How do you plan your lessons?
5. What do you think about during class time? After a student doesn't understand? When students make mistakes?
6. Tell me more about your background.
 - a. SLA courses? Current research projects?
 - b. Pedagogical training? Years and type of language teaching experience?
 - c. Language learning experience?

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