



Trouble sources and students' self-repair strategies in maintaining dynamics and understanding in online communication

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to explore trouble sources and students' repair strategies in maintaining communication dynamics and understanding. Using a descriptive qualitative method within the framework of conversation analysis, the researcher tries to describe, explain, and interpret the data collection. The data were in the form of words, phrases, or sentences populated from genuine conversations in discussion sessions of online doctoral student class interaction at one of the state universities in Central Java. Six doctoral students in a class of language education science participated in this study. The data sources were derived from voice recordings of class interactions during discussion sessions. The data were populated through four stages of recording, viewing, transcribing, and analyzing (RVIA). The study findings demonstrate that the repair strategies involved pauses, fillers, hedges, replacement, code mixing, repetition, and expansion. Meanwhile, the trouble sources were identified as a lack of knowledge and language errors (syntax and lexical aspects). By understanding the concept of repair strategies, students had the opportunity to modify, organize, and maintain communication dynamics and understanding. Meanwhile, teachers could use the knowledge to manage the class and assist students to be more proficient in delivering their ideas efficiently and accurately.

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Introduction

Interaction competence is an important tool in communication to deliver messages in any field of life, such as society, law, politics, economics, and education. This skill is manifested in many activities, including negotiation, discussion, social interaction, and answering questions in class. Interaction competence then determines and dictates how communication must occur effectively to achieve the desired goals of understanding among the interlocutors. In this light, it is important to underline the use of language during the

interaction. Knowledge and skills in using language are the basis for accurate and effective communication.

In the field of EFL (English as a foreign language), several studies have shown that interactional competence is the key to successful teaching and learning in the classroom and provides many benefits in the development of students' language skills. Walsh (2011) explicates that the success of teaching and learning depends on the quality of interactional competence practices. In this sense, the process of information exchange during learning activities supports the achievement of the learning objectives. In terms of language benefits, class interaction encourages students to be active by using all language skills and expanding language storage (Allwright, 1984). It also encourages students to experience the process of language acquisition (Ohta, 2001). Those benefits have the potential to be capitalized on in the ongoing process of class interaction and become a considerable input to promote more interaction.

During the process of interaction, there are certain difficulties and errors in the use of language. In order to ensure the delivery of the messages, the interlocutors repair their utterance by employing various strategies and being involved in the process of repair. Repair itself is a natural event that occurs in all conversations and talks. Novice learners with basic knowledge in language and even English teachers with advanced English skills and experience also use repair strategies in their communication. They use the repair mechanism for correction and clarification when they seemingly found errors and misunderstandings in the conversation (Schegloff et al., 1977). Repair functions to maintain conversation dynamics, keep communication running smoothly, coherence, and increase understanding between interlocutors. Different from error correction, which focuses on replacing a mistake with the correct information, repair represents general terms and tries to deal with difficulties and problems in speaking, hearing, and understanding in the interaction process (Schegloff, 2000).

Repair strategies provide a mechanism to address many issues, including appropriateness in conversation, misunderstanding the meaning, ambiguity, errors, and conversation flow. These strategies are important to discuss because they play an important role in maintaining coherence, effectiveness, accuracy, and efficiency in verbal interaction. In conversation analysis studies, concept repair is one of the important key elements besides turn-taking and adjacency pairs. The types also vary, consisting of self-initiated and other-initiated repair (Schegloff et al., 1977). To date, research on repair covers not only conversation interaction in daily life, but also many contexts such as online communication (texting and email, online chat), institutional talk (school, university, medical setting, court), and spoken discourse (conversations, discussions, dialogues, deliberations, and debates).

The use of repair differs in various contexts. Canonio et al. (2017) mentioned that in informal discussions, other-initiated repair is the most pronounced, indicating the process of collaboration in conversation. Whereas in institutional talk of educational context, self-initiated self-repairs are the most common type of repair in conversation and interaction. The social dynamic in the educational context shows that each individual is responsible for maintaining accuracy, precision, and clarity in communication.

In the context of higher education, a few researchers focused on the subjects of doctoral students with advanced English skills regarding the detailed analysis of trouble sources and

their specific self-repair strategies in dynamic online communication settings. Thus, this research aims to understand what the typical self-initiated repair strategies may appear during the online discussion. This research also intends to find out the source of troubles during the class interaction that hinder interlocutors from maintaining fluidity in the conversation.

Understanding repair strategies is beneficial for both teachers and students. During the interaction, interlocutors strive to modify, organize, and maintain communication to gain understanding. Those endeavours are so-called repair strategies (Rabab'ah, 2013). Teachers' comprehension and awareness of these strategies will lead to insight into the natural and erroneous processes in communication. In addition, teachers can use the knowledge to manage the class and assist students to be more proficient in delivering their ideas efficiently and accurately. For students, the awareness and understanding of these strategies will enable them to communicate with the interlocutors and expand their linguistic stock (Wong & Waring, 2010).

In discourse studies, repair becomes a key element in conversation analysis, which is identified as self-repair and other-repair. Schegloff (2000) and Wong and Waring (2020) classified the types of repairs into more detail, including self-initiation self-repair, other-initiation self-repair, other-initiation other repairs, and self-initiation-other repair. The difference between self-repair and other repair is in the absence of external prompting (Beshir & Yigzaw, 2022). In doing self-repair, the interlocutor does not have to pause and wait for a reply before modifying and correcting the utterances. In this regard, the interlocutor directly reorganizes the utterance to make sense and improve understanding for the audience.

The researcher found that the strategies apply differently in the contexts of daily conversation and formal talk, as in the classroom. In the mundane context (Schegloff et al., 1977), the conversation is smoother because the interaction does not need to follow certain language rules, words, or phrases. The interlocutors apply less strategy compared to a formal talk context, with a preference for self-initiation and self-completed repair. Meanwhile, the research in the EFL classroom (Walsh, 2011) concludes that the conversation breakdown and gap are widespread due to the dearth of limited communication competence and basic aspects of language, such as diction and syntax. Thus, the interlocutors urge the use of more strategies to overcome the communication breakdown.

Repair strategies are practiced by students at all levels of education, from elementary education to college, university, and adult students. In the context of elementary education, Cho and Larke (2010) reveal nine types of repair strategies, including unspecified, interrogatives, partial repeat, partial repeat plus question words, comprehension checks, requests for repetition, definition requests, translation requests, explanation requests, and nonverbal strategies.

Meanwhile, in the context of adult learners, the repair strategies are summarized into seven categories. The basic foundation of repair strategies is derived from the research of Schegloff et al. (1977), including unspecified, interrogatives, (partial) repeat, partial repeat plus question word, and understanding. In addition, the development research on this topic reveals the repair strategies of one-requests for repetition (Egbert, 1998) and definition, translation, or explanation (Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2003). Although those repair

strategies play in different contexts, the function is identical, which is to resolve the gap and breakdown in verbal communication, maintain fluid communication, and understanding.

In recent years, various researches on repair strategies have been conducted. They have successfully covered data from different subjects around the world that possibly give insight into the practice of repair from many aspects. The contexts of conversation are widespread from formal and informal talks, including classroom interaction, college trainees, teacher-student conversation, phone conversation, pharmacists and patients, casual conversation, and online interaction. Those different perspectives will enrich knowledge about the mechanism of repair, along with the understanding of the trouble sources.

The previous research results have identified the mechanism of repair into self-repair and other repair. The four types of repairs were classified into more detail, including self-initiation self-repair, other-initiation self-repair, other-initiation other-repair, and self-initiation-other-repair (Handayani et al., 2021; Laila et al., 2023; Manila et al., 2022). Among those types, self-repair becomes the most prominent focus of discussion (Alharbi, 2023; Beshir & Yigzaw, 2022; Delli et al., 2022; Laila et al., 2023; Manila et al., 2022) or the most frequently used by interlocutors in casual conversation and informal talks (Boström, 2021; Jiahao & Peng, 2021).

In terms of repair strategies, interlocutors' behaviour varies in resolving the hindrance during the conversation breakdown. Beshir and Yigzaw (2022) reveal that students engage in repetition and appropriateness to encounter their difficulties during class interaction. This result aligns with the findings of Delli et al. (2022) and Madar (2021), who conclude that the typical repair strategies. In the process of interaction, the students and the patients engage in repetition, replacement, and clarification to gain more understanding.

From the previous research, the results also enclosed the trouble sources divided into language errors and technical issues. Handayani et al. (2021) focus on comparing students' classroom interaction from Indonesia, Algeria, and Iran and gain comprehensive results on the trouble sources of communication breakdown. The trouble sources include both language errors (syntax and lexical aspects) and technical issues (problems of understanding, mishearing, and non-hearing). Meanwhile, Beshir and Yigzaw (2022) solely reveal language errors when they involve second-year EFL college trainees, which has a smaller scope compared to Handayani's research.

Method

Research approach

This research employs a descriptive qualitative method within the framework of conversation analysis. It focuses on understanding the issues of trouble sources and repair strategies in a genuine classroom interaction. The qualitative method is chosen based on the characteristics of the data, which are in the form of words (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this method, the researcher tries to describe, explain, and interpret the data as the standard data processing procedure (Cresswell & Poth, 2007).

Conversation analysis (CA) is a research method that examines how people use language and interaction to achieve mutual understanding in everyday communication. It focuses on the detailed structure of spoken or written conversations, analyzing features such as turn-taking, repair strategies, and the organization of talk. CA originated in sociology but is now

widely used in education, linguistics, and communication studies to uncover the methods participants use to manage interaction and resolve misunderstandings (Lindwall & Boström, 2024)

In the context of online communication, conversation analysis is especially valuable because it allows researchers to investigate how students identify and resolve trouble sources—such as misunderstandings, technical issues, or ambiguous messages—and how they employ self-repair strategies to maintain the flow and clarity of discussion. By closely examining the sequence of turns, the use of linguistic cues, and the timing of responses, CA provides insights into the dynamics of online interaction and the ways learners collaboratively construct meaning (Paulus et al., 2016)

This study should use conversation analysis because it offers a systematic and rigorous way to explore the micro-level processes of communication, which are often overlooked in broader discourse or survey-based research. CA enables researchers to identify specific patterns and strategies that students use to maintain understanding and engagement, making it highly relevant for understanding the complexities of online learning environments. Moreover, CA's focus on naturally occurring interactions ensures that findings are grounded in real-world practices, enhancing the validity and applicability of the research (Flinkfeldt et al., 2022).

Research setting and participants

Online classes have become a temporary option to conduct teaching and learning for doctoral students in the major of Language Education at one of the state universities in Central Java. In these classes, lecturers present the materials and manage discussion sessions to clarify and probe for more insights. The session becomes an opportunity to have class interaction, and it encourages students to explore more information and exchange information in spoken forms. In presenting utterances, students often make errors in their utterances. As such, the students employ repair strategies to ensure that the utterances are accurate and understandable.

This research involves six doctoral students in a class of Language Education majors in one of the state universities in Central Java. The students possess advanced English skills based on their previous educational background and experience in using English outside of classes. Their educational backgrounds are linear in the area of English education or linguistics, and they have been working professionally as English lecturers and teachers.

The doctoral students take several courses in the odd semester of the 2024 academic year, and all the courses include a discussion session as part of the learning method. In this scenario, lecturers urge students to have dynamic class interaction by taking turns asking and answering questions. As part of the research ethics, the research consent is distributed to inform about research details, and subsequently request permission to record and use the data collection for the research purposes.

In this study, the data sources are derived solely from primary data of voice recordings of class interactions during discussion sessions. The researcher is able to record several discussion sessions from different courses, and three sessions are taken as the sources of data

for this research. The other recordings are mostly in Indonesian, so the utterances cannot be considered appropriate and genuine in this context.

Data collection

The data are populated through four stages of recording, viewing, transcribing, and analyzing (RVIA). Having completed the initial stage, the voice recording gets a review to determine whether the conversation is mostly in English and appropriate for the topics of trouble source and conversation repair. In this study, the researcher finally selects three recordings of class interactions from the discussion sessions of several courses. Those recordings are consecutively transcribed using a transcription application and manually checked to gain accurate results. As this research occupies qualitative method, the transcribed data are described, explain, and interpreted to answer the research questions.

Data analysis

The data analysis of transcribed conversation follows Miles et al. (2014), including the process of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. During the process of data condensation, selective coding and thematic abstraction were used to reduce the large amounts of raw data. After verbatim transcriptions of the responses were made, recurrent patterns were found and extraneous information was eliminated in an iterative process.

Findings and discussion

The findings of this research relate to two research questions: the students' self-repair strategies in maintaining communication dynamics and understanding, and the trouble sources disrupting the communication dynamics and understanding. Although the students possess advanced English skills, they remain experienced in erroneous utterances and use repair strategies in their conversation.

Repairs strategies

In terms of repair strategies, this study finds the five mechanisms, including pauses, fillers, hedges, replacement, code mixing/switching, repetition, and expansion.

Pauses, fillers, and hedges

Pause, filler, or hedges are the most common repair strategies used by students. All subjects of this research experience and practice this repair strategy in many sections of their conversation as they directly interact with each other in the discussion sessions. They take turns to raise questions and subsequently get a reply from the presenter. In this scenario, the participants of discussion sessions have limited time to ask and answer the questions. Thus, they have to pause for a certain period of time and improvise in order to accurately explain the messages.

The fillers appear in the forms of *mmm*, *aaa*, *umm*, *yeah*, *ah*, and *eee*. At the same time, the hedges include two forms, such as *what is it'*, *you know*, and *right*. Those forms indicate the speaker's hesitation when they are thinking about the utterances. During the pause, they

have the opportunity to create, recreate, or repair the utterances to maintain the communication dynamic and understanding.

The pause is a subconscious occurrence when they are uncertain about the next utterance. The fillers and hedges are meaningless as their roles are to maintain the conversation dynamic. Different people may have different habits in encountering the pause with certain fillers or hedges. For example, speaker one automatically uses the hedge *you know* when she pauses in her explanation. Speaker 3 fills the gaps of conversation with the hedges *what is it*. Meanwhile, the other speakers use common fillers such as *aaa*, *mmm*, *eee* to maintain the fluidity of the class interaction.

As the samples, the following texts describe the repair strategies of pauses, fillers, and hedges used by students during the class interaction of an online discussion session.

Speaker 1: *Mmm*, Okay, thank you for the question. *Umm*, regarding with discourse analysis, *eeee*, I'm sorry I'm not revealing my face now. One is *mmmm* textually oriented discourse analysis, now that you are currently studying with. And there will also be critical discourse analysis, so it's not textually oriented. *Right*.

Speaker 1: So, maybe the textual or the verbal expression is yeah, but when it is delivered with a very plain face or *you know* sad or angry kind of expression, then it is, then it signals a disagreement or, *you know*, I'm sick of you. I'm fed up with your empty promises.

Speaker 3: *aaa* So, that's why, *aaa* like what like what I say, *aaa*, *what is it*, discourse analysis itself, it is not, *what is it*, related to the, *eee*, *what is it*, *yeah*, the text, the context, not related to the culture itself.

Speaker 3: Maybe it's quite different, right, with the Japanese culture. *Aaaa* If I'm not mistaken, *aaa* when I was learning *aaa* Japanese language, when I was *aaa* in the minus one, for one year, because it is *aaa* mata kuliah wajib, *aaa* with the Mr, *aaa* with the *aaa* sensei, *ah* forgot the name.

Replacement

In this mechanism of repairs, the interlocutors substitute and put more words, phrases or sentences into the utterances to complete the meaning. To name a few, the following are several samples of word replacement repair strategies derived from students' conversation: *the-like*, *in the my-in my*, *with the Mr-with the sensei*. In the following sample, the interlocutor replaces the word *the* with *like* to make sense of the utterance's meaning. The fragment *in the conversation* is vague and confusing in its meaning-making. When the speaker substitutes with *like in the conversation*, the utterance becomes meaningful and understandable for the audience.

Speaker 2: One of the examples, *aaaa* talk about yes, maybe yes. *Aaa*, *the like* in the conversation, I often hear my students say, yeah, yeah, yeah. Jadi so In Japanese, they say, hai, hai, hai.

It appears similarly in the fragment *in my references*, replaced by *in my references*. The speaker eliminates the article *the*, so the utterance becomes understandable. Although the fragment *in my references* is not appropriate in terms of structure and natural expression, it remains understandable in its literal meaning in Indonesian. Such replacement also applies in the sample of speaker one's utterance when the interlocutor replaces the fragment, *then it signals*, and the speaker two's fragment, *I think*, with what *they think*.

Speaker 3: But I think, umm, *in my*, *in my*, what is it, *aaa* references *mmm* that I read, but it's not repeating, yes, for example. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay, okay, okay.

Speaker 1: ... but when it is delivered with a very plain face or you know sad or angry kind of expression, *then it is, then it signals* a disagreement or, you know, I'm sick of you. I'm fed up with your empty promises.

Speaker 2: But in Indonesia, aaa I often hear like, ah, *maybe, maybe, I think, they think* I understand. I understand, I understand like that. So, they say *hai, hai, hai, or yeah, yeah, yeah.*

The replacement not only occurs at the level of words but also applies to phrases and sentences. The speaker aims to provide synonymous or alternative meanings that may expand the perspective of the topic discussion. The replacements of phrases, *language schools*, and *those modalities* are exemplified as in the following texts.

Speaker 1: GRE is like so, the authors would like to argue that eee this *language schools, language courses*, you know, *the institution, the language institutions* marketize themselves in the way that they look very American-ish or British

Speaker 1: Because all of *those modalities, let's call it as modalities*, all of those gestures, they also carry meanings.

In the level of sentence replacement, the speaker overtly intends to change the meaning by transforming the whole sentence into a new one. The syntax and lexical resources of the sentences are completely replaced to form a new structure and meaning. It can be seen in the following sample text that the speaker intentionally changes the sentence *maybe you can observe it yourself* into *I mean compare it with*. As a consequence, the meaning shifts from *observe* into *compare*.

Speaker 1: To make them think. *Kalau yang dominasi arena publik politisi ya udah, kalau mau kayak pemilu kayak gini ya, maybe you can observe it yourself, I mean compare it with*, you know, Japan.

Code mixing

In this study, the interlocutors surprisingly integrate the use of code mixing or code switching in the class interaction during the discussion session. In code mixing, the speaker uses Indonesian words or phrases to fill the gap of the sentence, so the interlocutor is able to complete the utterance. By so doing, the conversation fluidity is maintained, and the complete utterance has been delivered to the audience. Simultaneously, the understanding of the message is expected and improved.

Speaker 3: Maybe it's quite different, right, with the Japanese culture. Aaaa If I'm not mistaken, aaa when I was learning aaa Japanese language, when I was aaa in the minus one, for one year, because it is aaa *mata kuliah wajib*, aaa with the Mr, aaa with the aaa sensei, ah forgot the name.

Repetition

In repetition repair strategies, an interlocutor replicates the same word or phrases in order to emphasize and clarify the meaning. In the situation of speakers 2 and 3, the word '*maybe*' and the phrase '*I understand*' are examples of how the interlocutor attempts to highlight and pronounce the words and phrases, and grasp the audience's attention to focus on a certain part of the conversation. The speaker tries to signal that those recurring words and phrases are important without giving explicit instructions to observe them.

Speaker 2: But in Indonesia, aaa I often hear like, ah, *maybe, maybe*, I think, they think I understand. *I understand, I understand* like that. So, they say *hai, hai, hai, or yeah, yeah, yeah.*

Speaker 3: aaa So, that's why, aaa *like what like what* I say, aaa what is it, discourse analysis itself, it is not, what is it, related to the, eee what is it, yeah, the text, the context, not related to the culture itself.

From those samples, the repetition repair strategy merely appears in the form of words and phrases. None of the interlocutors repeats their sentences to confirm and clarify the message in the utterances. It indicates that the speakers have the concepts in their minds and are able to convey them in proper forms of sentences. However, they intend to emphasize certain parts of the sentence for the audience to focus on by performing repeated repair strategies.

Expansion

Expansion repair strategy relates to the interlocutors' attempt to add more information to previous utterances. It aims to elaborate on the meaning and provide details of the definition. In the sample of speaker 1, we find out that the speaker initially mentions *through the linguistic landscape*, but the utterance is simultaneously followed by a longer and detailed version. As such, the interlocutor considers the utterance is not fully understandable and requires more details by exemplifying the types of the linguistic landscape.

Speaker 1: What they teach, what values they want to internalize in their students *through the linguistic landscape, through the banners and posters, signs, semiotics* at schools.

In the following sample of speaker two's utterances, the speaker deliberately adds the word *hidden* to the previous utterance. *What's the meaning?* into *What's the hidden meaning?* In this case, the speaker tries to elaborate the request by focusing on the specific meaning, not the general meaning. By so doing, the interaction becomes fluid and dynamic because the other interlocutors do not need to provide general answers and focus on the specific one.

Speaker 2: Aaa I want to ask, *what's the meaning? What's the hidden meaning?* aaa The Indonesian students say *hai, hai, hai, or yeah, yeah, yeah* in a conversation.

The use of repair strategies in this context of study has exhibited successful message delivery in the classroom interaction of the discussion session. The students tried to maintain communication dynamics and understanding by using various strategies, including pause-filler-hedges, repetition, code mixing, replacement, and expansion. By so doing, it assures the quality of interactional competence and promotes successful teaching and learning (Walsh, 2011). When the class is able to maintain active interaction, the students gain the most advantages related to material mastery and language acquisition (Ohta, 2001), and language aspects such as language proficiency and language storage (Allwright, 1984).

Repair itself is a natural event that occurs in all conversations and talks. Novice learners with basic knowledge in language and even English teachers with advanced English skills and experience also use repair strategies in their communication. This concept applies similarly in this context. Although the students are at the level of doctoral degree with advanced English skills, they continue to experience the use of repair strategies in maintaining conversation dynamics and understanding.

The use of repair differs in various contexts. Canonio et al. (2017) mentioned that in informal discussions, other-initiated repair is the most pronounced, indicating the process of collaboration in conversation. Whereas in institutional talk of educational context, self-initiated self-repairs are the most common type of repair in conversation and interaction. The context of class interaction in discussion sessions also belongs to institutional talk. From the voice recording, the researcher has proven that in the educational context, the self-initiated self-repairs are the most common types used by students during class interactions. In this

sense, students try to repair their own utterance to maintain conversation fluidity and accuracy, precision, and clarity in communication.

Trouble source

In the context of higher education, by involving doctoral degree students as the subjects of this research, students do not exhibit any technical issues in the class interaction during discussion sessions. The technical issue relates to understanding the meaning of conversation, difficulty in hearing the English utterances, and the request to repeat the utterance. It actually correlates with the background knowledge and skills that the students possess, including advanced English skills, before they join the doctoral degree class. However, they continue to experience other problems in class interaction due to a lack of knowledge and language errors, such as syntax and lexical aspects.

Lack of knowledge

In this research, the repair strategies experienced by doctoral students in the class interaction during the discussion session are pauses, fillers, and hedges. When students hesitate in conversation, they start to pause and fill the gap with some types of filler, such as *aaa, eee, ummm, mmm*. These strategies actually indicate that students lack knowledge and are in the process of thinking and creating next utterances. The more fillers the students have, the more hesitation they experience, and the more indication that they are uncertain about the message they convey.

The students also use hedges in the conversation and fill the gap with *you know, what is it, right*. In linguistics, the use of hedges indicates uncertainty and less information and knowledge related to the topic discussion. Some speakers can use some variations of hedges, such as *maybe, seem, and perhaps* to soften the meaning in the utterances. When speakers use hedges, they also subconsciously indicate a lack of knowledge and are not confident in the information they are pronouncing.

Language errors (syntax and lexical aspects)

The trouble sources of language errors are reflected in the use of repair strategies of replacement and code mixing. In replacement repair strategies, the speakers change the word *the* with *like* in the utterance *the like in the conversation*. The replacement of those words relates to syntax language errors, as the utterance *in the conversation* does not fulfil the correct structure. As a consequence, the meaning becomes difficult to understand. When the speaker replaces the word *like in the conversation*, the utterance becomes accurate and understandable.

Speaker 2: One of the examples, aaaa talk about yes, maybe yes. Aaa *the like* in the conversation, I often hear my students say, yeah, yeah, yeah. Jadi so In Japanese, they say, hai, hai, hai.

In the lexical aspect, this trouble source can be seen in the code-mixing repair strategies. During the discussion session, the interlocutor combined English utterances with Indonesian. He tried to complete the utterance in English, but he opted for Indonesian after the filler *aaa* to complete the sentence. It seems that he finds it difficult to complete the sentence in English. In this way, he has successfully maintained the communication dynamic.

Speaker 3: Maybe it's quite different, right, with the Japanese culture. Aaaa If I'm not mistaken, aaa when I was learning aaa Japanese language, when I was aaa in the minus one, for one year, because it is aaa *mata kuliah wajib*, aaa with the Mr, aaa with the aaa sensei, ah forgot the name.

Such a case indicates that the speakers have an issue with the lexical aspect related to language storage. He does not remember or cannot retrieve related words to encode the message into English.

In the context of higher education, by involving doctoral degree students as the subjects of this research, students do not exhibit technical issues in class interaction during discussion sessions. The technical issue relates to understanding the meaning of conversation, difficulty in hearing the English utterances, and the request to repeat the utterance. It actually correlates with the background knowledge and skills that the students possess, including advanced English skills, before they join the doctoral degree class.

The analysis of trouble sources in online communication among doctoral students reveals critical insights supported by previous studies in the field. The identified trouble sources include lack of knowledge, language errors (especially syntax and lexical aspects), and hesitation markers like pauses, fillers, and hedges. These findings are consistent with prior research that highlights similar challenges in higher-education online interactions.

Lack of knowledge often triggers hesitation signs such as pauses and fillers (e.g., "aaa," "eee"), which signal cognitive processing difficulties and uncertainty in message formulation. According to Beshir (2022), such hesitation is a natural part of self-repair strategies where learners attempt to maintain conversation flow despite incomplete knowledge or planning gaps. Hedges like "you know" or "maybe" also indicate uncertainty and serve to soften statements, reflecting speakers' awareness of their limited competence regarding the topic.

Language errors, notably in syntax and lexical choice, cause trouble in understanding. Repair strategies such as replacement and code-mixing emerge to resolve these issues. Replacement, where incorrect words are substituted with more appropriate alternatives (e.g., changing "the" to "like"), helps restore grammatical correctness and meaning clarity. Similarly, code-mixing, combining English with Indonesian, demonstrates adaptive communication to bridge lexical gaps, as noted in studies by Belgrimet (2020) on repair strategies in EFL learners, which showed similar repair tactics to handle syntactic and lexical difficulties.

Overall, these trouble sources and corresponding repair strategies highlight the dynamic nature of online academic interactions. They emphasize the essential role of conversational analysis in identifying specific barriers and learners' adaptive behaviors in digital communication settings. This approach aligns with educational research focused on enhancing interactional competence and managing communication breakdowns effectively.

Conclusion

Erroneous utterances are an indispensable part of conversation or spoken interaction in both casual and formal contexts, including the classroom setting, which is the focus of this research. Interlocutors cannot avoid such utterances due to their characteristic of natural occurrence, and may be experienced by teachers and students. Although the students possess advanced English skills, they often exhibit errors in their utterances and employ

repair strategies in conversation. In this context, doctoral students of English education maintained the dynamics and understanding in online communication by applying repair strategies, such as pauses, fillers, hedges, replacements, code mixing, repetition, and expansion. Those strategies respond to the trouble sources that the students encounter, including a lack of knowledge and language errors (syntax and lexical aspects).

By understanding the concept of repair strategies, students have the opportunity to modify, organize, and maintain communication dynamics and understanding. Teachers can use the knowledge to manage the class and assist students to be more proficient in delivering their ideas efficiently and accurately. The results of this study have proven that erroneous utterances are a natural occurrence. It can be experienced by novice English learners, as referred to in the previous study. Likewise, the erroneous utterance occurs in the context of advanced English learners. The repair strategies and the trouble sources from this study are beneficial specifically for the context of teaching higher education in conducting teaching and learning by using English as a language of instruction.

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