AN EXAMINATION OF THE USE OF REPAIR STRATEGIES OF ELEMENTARY ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) STUDENTS BY CLASS TYPES AND GRADE LEVELS

A Dissertation

by

EUN HYE CHO

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2008

Major Subject: Curriculum and Instruction

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	Particia J. Larke
Committee Members,	Carolyn Clark
	Janet Hammer
	Sharolyn Pollard-Durodola
Head of Department,	Dennie Smith

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Major Subject: Curriculum and Instruction

ABSTRACT

An Examination of the Use of Repair Strategies of Elementary English as a Second Language (ESL) Students by Class Types and Grade Levels.

(May 2008)

Eun Hye Cho, B.A., Sookmyung Women's University, Korea;

M.A., Sookmyung Women's University, Korea

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Patricia J. Larke

The primary purpose of this study was to explore conversational repair strategies employed by elementary level ESL students in their classroom. This study investigated repair strategies that were employed by ESL students and determined if there were differences in the usage of repair strategies by class types and grade levels. This study examined how elementary ESL students' repair strategies dealt with communication breakdown in their ESL classroom from a conversation analysis perspective.

The data were collected from five participants who were in two different types of ESL classes: (1) instruction centered class; and (2) language related game-playing class. In order to investigate the variable of grade levels, first and second grade students' ESL class and third and fourth grade students' tutoring class were chosen. Twenty-four class hours were observed with a video camera. The data were transcribed following the transcription conventions of conversation analysis.

The results derived from the study were following;

1. In this study the elementary ESL students used nine types of repair strategies. They were: 1) unspecified, 2) interrogatives, 3) (partial) repeat, 4) partial repeat plus question word, 5) understanding check, 6) requests for repetition, 7) request for definition, translation or explanation, 8) correction, and 9) nonverbal strategies. The elementary ESL students used understanding check and partial repeat more frequently.
2. The findings indicated that both class types and grade levels influenced the types and distribution of the students' repair strategies.
3. Instruction class produced more amounts of conversational repair than game-playing class. However, in both types of classes, first/second grade students employed understanding check the most frequently, and third/fourth grade students partial repeat the most.
4. In the first/second grade students' repair practices, understanding check was observed in the teacher's direction. In the third/fourth grade students' repair practices, however, understanding check was observed in the content of instruction. Request for repetition and request definition, translation, or explanation were not observed in the first/second grade students' class but used in the third/fourth grade students' class.
5. Students' decisions on the types and frequency of their repair strategies were influenced by their familiarity with the native speakers.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is heartily dedicated to my family:

My parents, Mun Sook Cho and Soon Ja Park

My parents-in-law, Dong Bae Kim and Hyun Sook Han

My husband, Dr. Jongsoon Kim

My daughter, Julie Kim

For their unconditional love, support, and sacrifice.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The number of school-aged students who are enrolling in English as a second language (ESL) program in the U.S. continues to increase. According to the data by National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs (NCELA), in the ten years between 1996 and 2006, the share of English language learners at elementary and secondary schools increased by over 57%, from 3 to more than 5 million children (NCELA, 2007). Specifically in Texas, between 1995 and 2005, limited English proficient population has grown 49.5%, while the general school population has grown only 16.3% (NCELA, 2006). The summary report showed that over 67% of all limited English proficient students were enrolled at the elementary level (Kindler, 2002).

Typically in elementary ESL classrooms, the instruction is carried on in English in which students have limited competence (Van Lier, 1988). For this reason, there could be much miscommunication between students and teachers. In many situations students try to solve this miscommunication with their teachers and other students to gain mutual understanding. Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks (1977) call these kinds of activities as conversational repair, which is defined as the means to be used by interactants for resolving problems of speaking, hearing, and understanding. Therefore, repair may be

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This dissertation follows the style and format of *TESOL Quarterly*.

defined as the treatment of trouble occurring in interactive language use.

Over the past two decades research on conversational repair in the field of second language acquisition has centered on the nature of repair processes (Kasper, 1985; Van Lier, 1998; Boulima, 1999; Markee, 2000; Seedhouse, 2004) and the repair types that are beneficial for language learning (Kinginger, 1995; Boyd & Maloof, 2000; Oliver & Mackey, 2003) and compared native speakers' repair with nonnative speakers'(Gaskill, 1980; Schwartz, 1980; Egbert, 1985). Long (1983), Swain (1985), and Gass (1997) asserted that repair plays a primary role in the acquisition of a second language. In the repair process learners get chances to receive comprehended input and produce comprehensible output (Pica, Halliday, Lewis & Morgenthaler, 1989). Language learners profit from comprehensible (Krashen, 1981) and modified input (Musumeci, 1996) which language learners get as a result of interlocutor's modification of their talk during repair processes (Pica, 1994; Pica, Young & Doughty, 1987). In addition, repair sequences give the learners opportunity to produce modified and reprocessed output. Swain (1985) called it comprehensible output through which second language acquisition is advanced.

Many studies have examined conversation in various language-learning classrooms, and found that there are classroom-specific characteristics in the repair process (Gaskill, 1980; Schwartz, 1980; Egbert, 1985; Buckwalter, 2001; Shehadeh, 1999; Panova and Lyster, 2002; Dings & Jobe, 2003). In everyday conversation of native speakers Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks (1977) found that the speakers prefer to repair their own utterance in order to avoid interruptions from the hearer for the repair

work. However, second language classrooms have specific characteristics. The participants are not competent users of the target language and talk in language classroom has a pedagogical orientation (Van Lier, 1988). Therefore, there is a preference that teachers (i.e. hearers) initiate the repair to the students' errors or mistakes which triggers the students' correction and students often correct their talk (McHoul, 1990).

Several studies have been carried out on repair organization in the second language classroom context (Kasper, 1985; Van Lier, 1988; Boulmia, 1999; Seedhouse, 2004). Repair is organized differently according to context types. Seedhouse (2004) concludes that "each context has its own particular pedagogical focus and its own typical organization of repair which is reflexively related to that pedagogical focus" (p. 158).

Statement of Problem

Few studies compared native speakers' repair strategies with nonnative speakers' (Egbert, 1998; Liebscher & Dailey-O'cain, 2003). In native speakers' mundane conversation there are five types of repair techniques which were identified by Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks (1977). These include repair initiators such as (1) 'huh?' or 'what?' (2) wh-question words such as 'who', 'where' and 'when', used alone (3) wh-question words used together with a partial repeat of the trouble source turn, (4) the phrase 'you mean' plus a possible understanding of the prior talk, and (5) a partial repeat of the prior talk with upward intonation (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977).

In adult language learning classrooms, Egbert (1998) and Liebscher & Dailey-O'cain (2003) discovered two specific repair strategies. They are requests for repetition (Egbert, 1998) and request for definition, translation or explanation (Liebscher & Dailey-O'cain, 2003). However, researchers failed to examine the repair strategies of elementary level ESL students. Both the native speaker children and bilingual children were capable of differentiating the types of communication breakdowns and of responding to explicit feedback concerning the cause of the breakdowns (Gallagher, 1977; Comeau & Genesee, 2001, Comeau, Genesee & Mendelson, 2007). According to Brinton, Fujiki, Loeb & Winkler (1986), children's use of repair strategies in their native language to provide clarification changes with age. While younger children mainly use repetition, older children use other strategies as well. It is this assumption that is the starting point for the present study.

Little research has been done on elementary level student talk that involves the description of how students use different types of repair strategies in different conversation breakdowns in the second language classroom. Therefore, the present study was designed to investigate elementary level students' repair strategies.

Significance of the Study

This study proposes to examine the elementary ESL students' repair strategies to deal with communication breakdown in their ESL classroom from the perspective of a conversation analysis. Essentially, this study seeks to analyze repair types and their frequencies employed by students in the classroom according to class type and grade

levels. Additionally, then this study will discuss the ESL students' repair patterns, functions, and strategies.

Through examining ESL students' repair strategies in light of class types and grade levels groups, this study will contribute to the growing body of research in two aspects. First, this study will provide further insight into the complexities of student talk. Better understanding of how elementary ESL students treat communication breakdown will provide us with more insights on how to construct better ESL lessons.

Second, this study adopts conversation analysis. This study approaches ESL students' talk with a methodology that is different from those previously used in second language acquisition studies. Instead of analyzing linguistic products of students, this study focuses on the processes toward mutual understanding between students and teachers. With a micro-analytic approach this study may provide insight on how repairing assist in second language development.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to explore conversational repair strategies employed by elementary level ESL students in their classroom. In other words, this study was an attempt to provide greater understanding of elementary ESL students' repair strategies involving communication problems within the classroom. This study investigated repair strategies that were employed by students and determined if there were differences in the usage of repair strategies by class types and grade levels. This

study was conducted using the elementary ESL students who came to the ESL classroom during regular school hours.

Theoretical Base

This study followed Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sack's (1977) definition of repair. It includes processes for mutual comprehension such as word search as well as a replacement or correction on hearable errors or mistakes. Accordingly repair strategies include students' verbal or nonverbal responses to teacher's or another student's wrong, incomplete, or silent responses. According to Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks (1977), native speakers of English in ordinary conversation used repair techniques such as unspecified, interrogatives, (partial) repeat, partial repeat plus question word, and understanding check. The practices of repair in the second language classroom, however, were different in some ways due to the characteristics of the second language classroom and the nature of the participants (Van Lier, 1988). Thus, this study incorporated Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks's techniques with other categories which were discovered by Egbert (1998), Liebscher & Dailey-O'cain (2003), and Panova & Lyster (2002) in second language classroom. Those are requests for repetition and requests for definition, translation or explanation, and correction.

Research Questions

The following questions were examined in this study:

1. What are the types and frequency distributions of students' repair strategies that elementary ESL students employ in the classroom?
2. How do these types of repair strategies differ according to the class types?
3. How do these types of repair strategies differ according to the grade levels of the students?
4. What other characteristics are observed in elementary students' practices of repair in ESL classroom?

Definition of Terms

Repair: Repair in ordinary conversation means the treatment on the problems of hearing or understanding. It includes processes for mutual comprehension such as word search as well as a replacement or correction on hearable errors or mistakes. A comprehensive investigation of repair in everyday conversation was initially carried out by Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977).

Repair strategies: Repair strategies include students' verbal or nonverbal responses to teacher's or another student's wrong, incomplete, or silent responses. They also include students' responses that either repair the trouble directly in the same turn or initiate repair that the teacher, another student will complete the repair.

Conversation analysis: Conversation analysis studies the organization and order of social action in interaction (Psathas, 1995). Conversation analysis researchers focused on describing the organizational structure of classroom conversation of second language learners as well as ordinary conversation of native speakers.

Trouble source: Trouble source refers to any elements in conversation which cause communication breakdown to the participants. It could be placed anywhere during conversational interaction and any element could be repaired by participants in conversation, even it is a grammatically correct form or pragmatically appropriate expression.

Self/other: Self is the party who produce the trouble source in his/her talk and the other is any other interlocutor.

Preference: Preference is not a statistical term, but rather refers to the markedness of certain actions. A preferred response in the conversation is the one which follows the norms (Seedhouse, 2004), and hence occur without any hesitation or linguistic marking.

Instruction class: The instruction class is characterized by fixed roles, teacher-oriented tasks, and focus on knowledge content (Kramsch, 1985).

Game-playing class: The game-playing class is characterized by negotiated roles, and focus on the process and fluency.

Assumptions

This study assumed that:

1. Students in elementary ESL classes are capable of dealing with communication breakdown with various kinds of repair strategies.
2. Students in elementary ESL classes select repair types that meet their linguistic competence and cognitive levels.

Limitations of the Study

The study has several limitations that appeared during the progress of the research.

1. First, there was inequality in oral English proficiency among students who participated in this study. One of the students had never taken an English class before he came to the US by the time of data collection, while the other four students had taken an English class at least one semester at the time of data collection. Because of the limited number of ESL students whose parents were willing to participate in this study, the researcher did not exclude the data that came from this less proficient English speaking student. Therefore, the level of proficiency was not strictly controlled.
2. Another limitation is related to a generalization about language learning. This study was conducted in the small sized ESL classrooms of one elementary school. All the participants were from Asian countries such as India, China, and Korea. Findings for this study may not lead to a generalization about repair practices of elementary ESL students. Instead, this study will lead to discovery of how elementary students use repair strategies to communicate effectively in their ESL classroom.

Organization of the Study

Five chapters are presented in the dissertation. Chapter I is an overview of findings by researchers on the repair. Chapter I also provide a statement of the problem and present the questions that guide the study. Chapter II is a review of the literature that

provides appropriate historical and theoretical information. Chapter III describes the design and research methodology, the description of participants, and description of analysis methods. Chapter IV contains an elaboration of the findings for the research questions. An overall conclusion of the study and recommendations for future research is in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The conceptual framework of this study takes conversation analysis for the theoretical and methodological approach. This section consists of five parts to introduce conversation repair with conversation analytic approach. The first part will introduce conversation analysis as the major theoretical and methodological approach that has been taken in a number of conversational repair studies. The second part will introduce the field of conversational repair, the definition of repair, and repair trajectories. Part three will examine research on repair practices in classroom conversation including regular classroom with native speakers and second language classroom with nonnative speakers. In the fourth part, findings related to repair strategies of native speakers in ordinary conversation will be discussed. Lastly, repair strategies of language learners in classroom settings will be presented.

Conversation Analysis

Studies on practices of conversational repair began with those on the ordinary conversation of native English speakers conducted by a group of scholars using the conceptual and methodological framework of conversation analysis. Historically, conversation analysis began life in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Initially conversation analysis researchers focused on describing the organizational structure of mundane, ordinary conversation between friends and acquaintances either face-to-face or on the

telephone. There were, for example, opening up conversations (Schegloff, 1979), closing theory (Button, 1987; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), exchanging greetings (Button, 1987; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), responding to compliments (Pomerantz, 1978), direction-giving (Pasthas, 1986) and so on. More specifically, researchers described this organizational structure in terms of sequences, turn-taking and repair practices (Goodwin, 1981; Jefferson, 1978; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Shegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977)

Since the late 1970s, conversation analysis has extended its scope to a variety of work or organizational settings such as courtrooms (Atkinson & Drew, 1978; Maynard, 1984; Pollner, 1979), doctors' office (Frankel, 1990: Heath, 1984; Ten Have, 1991) and among the police (Meehan, 1989; Whalen, 1994; Zimmerman, 1992) as well as news interviews (Heritage & Greatbatch, 1991), political speeches (Atkinson, 1984) and school settings (McHoul, 1990; Macbeth, 2004).

While conversation analysis studies have focused on native speaker interactions in everyday conversation, in second language acquisition, repair has received attention as a critical factor for nonnative speakers' second language acquisition. Recently, there has been a growing body of conversation analytic work on repair practices in institutional talk and native/non-native conversations (Gaskill, 1980; Hosoda, 2001; Wong, 2000; Koshik, 2005).

The basic assumption of conversation analysis is that social actions have a natural organization and any competent members of society can discover and analyze the structures and rules with close examination. According to Psathas (1995), conversation

analysis studies the organization and order of social action in interaction. Adherents of conversation analysis concerns with the discovery, description, and analysis of the principles which people use to interact with language. Thus, conversation analysis is an empirical research methodology with the goal of understanding the social structure underlying interaction (Egbert, 1988).

The methodology of conversation analysis is qualitative in that "conversation analysis attempts to explicate in emic terms the conversational practices that speakers orient to by unpacking the structure of either single cases or collections of talk-in-interaction". (Markee, 2000, p. 26). Conversation analysis practitioners aim to discover the principles with a participant-based perspective. Conversation analysis establishes an emic perspective not by interviewing research participants, but by examining the details of the "procedural infrastructure of situated action" (Ten Have, 1999, p. 37).

Conversation analysis aims to trace the development of intersubjectivity in an action sequence. This means that analysts trace how participants analyze and interpret each other's actions and develop a shared understanding of the progress of the interaction. Conversation analysis shows that trouble in communication occurs in natural conversation, and that speakers and hearers have specific ways of dealing with the trouble. The ways to deal with trouble of native speakers may be similar or different from those of second language learners. Therefore, "there is no doubt that it is important to find out how trouble is repaired in second language classrooms, as a precursor to finding out how repairing may assist in L2 development" (Van Lier, 1988, p. 182).

Conversational Repair

Repair is an organization of practices of talk which participants can deal with problems or troubles in speaking, hearing, or understanding talk. A comprehensive and thorough investigation of repair in everyday conversation was initially carried by Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977). A communication breakdown occurs when a message is not properly carried among participants and as a result the conversation is blocked. These breakdowns may be overcome with various repair activities by either speakers or listeners. Trouble source which cause communication breakdown to the participants could be placed anywhere during the communication process. Also any element could be repaired by participants in conversation, even if it is a grammatically correct form or pragmatically appropriate expression.

Excerpt 2.1. Repair with no error

Olive: → Yihknow Mary uh:::: (0.3) oh:: what was it.

→ Uh:: Tho:mpson. (Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks, 1977, p. 363)

Excerpt 2.2. Repair to grammatically correct form

Ken: → Sure enough ten minutes later the bell r-

→ the doorbell rang …. (p. 363)

In Excerpt 2.1 Olive is searching the name “Thompson.” Olive has trouble source and tries to initiate repair by vowel lengthening with “what was it”. Even though

there is no error in the first line, repair is being done. In Excerpt 2.2 Ken initiates repair and completes it in the second line. As the same with Excerpt 2.1 there is no hearable error, mistake, or fault in the first line.

As these examples illustrate, the repair sequence may appear frequently in everyday communication with or without error. Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977) pointed out that "nothing is, in principle, excludable from the class 'repairable'" (p.363). For this reason the term repair is preferred to correction because the latter refers to the replacement of an error or mistake, while the former includes more than the replacement of an error. Repair here is not only a replacement or correction but can also involve other phenomena such as word searches that do not involve hearable errors, mistakes, or faults. Hearable errors do not always repair initiation and completion.

Excerpt 2.3. No repair to grammatical mistake

Avon Lady: And for ninety-nine cents uh especially in,
→ Rapture, and the Au Coeur which is the newest
→ fragrances, uh that is a very good value.
Customer: Uh huh, (p. 363)

In Excerpt 2.3 the Avon Lady makes a grammatical mistake. Since the subject "Rapture and the Au Coeur" was plural she need to use "are" instead of "is" in the second line. Also in the third line she makes the same mistake but no repair was initiated either by the speaker itself or hearer.

Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977) classified the repair trajectories into four groups. Those are self-initiated repair (speaker promptly notices his/her own mistake and initiates repair), other-initiated repair (listener notices speaker's mistake and initiates repair), self-repair (speaker corrects him/herself), and other-repair (listener corrects speaker's mistake). Self is the party whose turn has the trouble source and the other is any other interlocutor.

Excerpt 2.4. Self-initiated self-repair

N: She was givin me a:ll the people that
→ were go:ne this yea:r I mean this
→ quarter y'//know
J: Yeah (p. 364)

Excerpt 2.5. Self-initiated other-repair

B: → He had dis uh Mistuh W – whatever k – I can't
think of his first name, Watts on, the one that wrote // that piece
A: → Dan Watts (p. 364)

In Excerpt 2.4 speaker N produces trouble source and initiates repair with 'I mean' by him/herself in the same turn. In Excerpt 2.5 speaker B, who has the trouble source, is initiating repair by searching for the name he/she could not remember. And speaker A is doing repair for B at the next turn.

Excerpt 2.6. Other-initiated self-repair

A: Hey the first time they stopped me from selling cigarettes was this morning.

(1.0)

B: → from selling cigarettes?

A: from buying cigarettes. (p. 370)

Excerpt 2.7. Other-initiated other-repair

L: But y'know single beds'r awfully thin tuh sleep on.

S: What?

L: Single beds. // They're –

E: → Y'mean narrow?

L: They're awfully narrow // yeah. (p.378) [1]

In Excerpt 2.6 A has produced trouble source and B is initiating repair in the second turn and in the third turn A is completing repair. In Excerpt 2.7 L has produced trouble source in the first line, and S initiates repair in the next turn with unspecified repair initiator 'what' but L's repair is not successful. Speaker E initiates repair asking his/her

[1] In the transcript convention typically used in conversation analysis, intonation is indicated by a comma, a period and a question mark, which mean continuing intonation, falling intonation, and a rising intonation, respectively. In the earliest CA publications, the place where a second overlapped a first was marked with double slashes (//), but this device is not used anymore, being replaced by the square bracket ([ ]) system.

possible understanding of prior turn. In this case speaker S initiated repair and speaker E completed it on the L's trouble source.

Repair in Classroom Conversation

The contexts of conversation analysis have been extended to institutional setting especially in classroom setting. Repair occurs in both everyday conversation and classroom discourse, but McHoul (1990) found several differences in a study of the repair organization in a traditional geography class in an Australian secondary school. According to Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977) in general conversation there is a preference for self-initiation, self-completed repair. However, in classroom setting, McHoul found that there is more tendency on other-initiation (mostly by teacher), self-completed repair (by students). McHoul concluded that "other-correction can occur without difficulty, but self-correction is a much more routine and observable phenomenon, and it is frequently undertaken by students following initiation by teachers" (1990, p. 353).

In second language acquisition, repair has received attention as a critical factor for nonnative speakers' second language acquisition. In the process of repair second language learners can get both comprehended input and comprehensible output (Pica, 1994; Pica, Halliday, Lewis, & Morgenthaler, 1989). Since second language learners are not-yet-competent speakers in the target language, there are more problems needing repair in second language classrooms (Van Lier, 1988). Due to the multiple reasons such as speaking too softly, pronouncing words inaccurately, poor lexical choice, or providing

vague explanations, participants in second language classrooms encounter communication breakdowns frequently (Comeau & Genesee 2001). Therefore, researchers in second language acquisition focused on repair organization and compared native speakers' repair with that of nonnative speakers.

Kasper (1985) studied the repair patterns that occurred in an English as a foreign language classroom at a Danish gymnasium. Kasper distinguished two types of phases in the class: language-centered and content-centered phases. Language-centered phase focused exclusively on formal correctness. In Language-centered phase there is a preference for what she called "delegate repair" over self-completed repair done by the learner who produced the trouble source (p. 207). Delegated repair refers to other-completed repairs which the teacher initiates and passes to another learner for completion. The delegated repair has the function of involving other learners in the repair activity and encouraging active participation in the learning process. Excerpt 2.8 includes repair delegation and the teacher's assistance to the completion/response.

Excerpt 2.8. Delegate repair

LI: everyone could see that it would break

T: i stedet for (instead of)

LI: instead of (…)

T: can't you hear it sounds strange – to say that you will do something instead of – you never end it – Henrik

LH: everyone could see that it would break instead

T: instead yes (explanation follows) (p. 207)

Content-centered phase aims at developing the learner's ability to express their ideas about content matters. In content-centered phase, self-initiated, self-completed repairs are preferred. Other-initiated, other-completed repairs are also frequently done by teachers, which is different from the language-centered phase. Unlike the language-centered phase, participants avoid interrupting content-oriented talk when linguistic trouble sources occur.

In a similar vein, Seedhouse (2004) claimed that each second language classroom context has its own peculiar repair organization and "this is reflexively related to the pedagogical focus of the context" (p. 142). Seedhouse compared repair organization in three types according to classroom context: form-and-accuracy contexts, meaning-and-fluency contexts, and task-oriented contexts. Repair in form-and-accuracy contexts is overwhelmingly initiated by the teacher to the trouble source produced by students. In form-and-accuracy contexts, any errors such as phonological, syntactical, or pragmatical misuse may be treated as trouble by the teacher and may be treated as repairable. The focus of repair in meaning-and-fluency contexts is on establishing mutual understanding. In meaning-and-fluency contexts, overt correction is undertaken only when there is an error which impedes communication. The repair in task-oriented contexts is focused on the accomplishment of the task. Seedhouse concludes that "the organization of repair in the second language classroom can best be understood in relation to the evolving and reflexive relationship between pedagogy and interaction". (p.159)

Van Lier (1988) categorized repair types as “language functions which reflect the purposes of the participants; medium-oriented, message-oriented, activity-oriented” (p. 187).

Excerpt 2.9. Medium-oriented:

1 L2: I was listening listening

2-3 L1: [in the ra-] [to the radio in (bed)]

4 L2: oh ja

5 L1: while you having a bath

6 L2: and you and you was having a bath

7 L1: [you were-were having] (p. 187)

Medium-oriented repair focuses on the forms and/or functions of the target language.

Excerpt 2.10. Message-oriented:

1 E: what do you think is the main problem in the future.

2 F: in the future ..

3 E: m:

4 F: listening to the class an: technical words

5 E: [m:?]

6 F: como? ((tr: what?))

7 F: technical words

8 E: technical words (p.188)

Message-oriented repair focused on the exchange of thoughts, information, feelings, etc.

Excerpt 2.11. Activity-oriented:

1 T: o::h okay. Ruben how about number five …

2 L7: five oh

3 T: [number … I'm sorry .. four okway yeah

4 LL: [/four/four/] (p.188)

Activity-oriented repair focuses on the organization and structure of the classroom environment, rules for the conduct of activities, etc.

Van Lier suggests that there are four kinds of repair in the second language classroom; didactic repair, conversational repair, conjunctive repair and disjunctive repair. Didactic repair is specifically pedagogic in nature, and conversational repair is common to all face-to-face interaction and addresses problems of the talk. Conjunctive repair is designed to help, enable and support, and disjunctive repair is designed to evaluate, challenge, and contest. Excerpt 2.9 and 2.11 are the examples of conjunctive repair. L1 repairs to help L2 produce utterances in line 2-3, 5, and 7 of Excerpt 2.9. In Excerpt 2.11 L7 repairs T's mistake at the second line.

Excerpt 2.12. Disjunctive repair

1 T: ((to L8)) you're going to California?

2 L9: California?

3 T: California.

4 L4: ((to L8)) how do you: going?

5 T: how are you going? (p. 209)

Excerpt 2.12 is an example of disjunctive repair. T repairs L4's utterance, providing grammatically correct form and terminates the repair sequence in line 5. Van Lier confirmed that certain types of activity naturally lead to certain types of repair, and that therefore the issue of how to repair is closely related to the context of class.

Boulima (1999) expanded Van Lier's repair categories in the study of Morrocan elementary school English as a foreign language classes. Boulima looked at repair initiators as devices of negotiated interaction in the classroom and categorized them into two major orientation types of negotiation: didactic and conversational. Didactic negotiation aims at the resolution of interactional problems specific to the target language, and the resolution process results in medium-oriented negotiation, comprehension check-oriented negotiation, turn-taking-oriented negotiation, and complete sentence-oriented negotiation. Conversational negotiation encompasses seven kinds of negotiation, namely hearing-oriented negotiation, meaning-oriented negotiation, content-oriented negotiation, general knowledge-oriented negotiation, agreement-

oriented negotiation, surprise-display-oriented negotiation, and conversational continuant. Boulima identified a number of trouble sources in conversational negotiation.

Some of the studies have shown preference structures of repair organization in the second language classroom (Kinginger, 1995; Markee, 2000; Buckwalter, 2001). Preference is not a statistical term, but rather refers to the markedness of certain actions. A preferred action, such as self-initiated, self-completed repair in natural conversation, can come out without any hesitation or linguistic marking, whereas a less preferred action goes with some type of dispreference marker, such as hesitation or hedging (Dings & Jobe, 2003). Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977) noted the exceptions of preference structure observed in conversation of native speaker as follows:

> The exception [to the preference for self-initiated, self-completed repair] is most apparent in the domain of adult-child interaction, in particular parent-child interaction, but may well be more generally relevant to the not-yet-competent in some domain without respect to age (p. 381).

Since second language learners can be considered "not-yet-competent without respect to age", several studies have investigated interaction with nonnative speakers and compared the preference organization of native speakers found by Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (p.381).

Kinginger (1995) describes the outcome of a study examining repair in conversations among American learners of French as a foreign language. Specifically,

Kinginger explored the types of repair used by learners of French as they performed two activities in their classroom. The study demonstrated that learners in instructional activities produced great amounts of the other-initiated and other-completed repair, which is typical of teacher-led classroom interaction. In more natural tasks, learners avoided repair in the second language and used code-switching frequently.

After analysis of data Kinginger (1995) compared the repair of learners in foreign language classroom and learners in English as a second language classroom. Learners in foreign language classroom use code switching frequently for communication because they share a common native language. However, English as a second language learners typically do not share a common linguistic and cultural background, and so rely heavily upon their second language for communication. From these findings Kinginger pointed out that the linguistic and cultural homogeneity of language classes has an impact on the negotiation of meaning.

Markee (2000) claimed that there are two distinct types of repair in nonnative speakers' interaction. When students know the answer to a comprehension question of the content, they answer it immediately with little repair work. The little repair work indicates their preference for self-initiated, self-completed repair. When they do not know the answer to a question, particularly vocabulary-oriented questions, very lengthy sequences follow. Markee concluded that learners' preferences for two distinct types of repair (self-initiated, self-completed repair vs. self-initiated, other-completed repair) reflect their relative states of knowledge at particular moments of conversation.

Buckwalter (2001) studied the repair patterns in the dyadic discourse of adult learners of Spanish. Buckwalter collected data during referential communicative activities in the foreign language classroom for two years. Self-initiated self-repair was overwhelmingly the most common repair sequence found in the data and it was found to operate on the lexicon, pronunciation, and morphosyntax, while other repair pattern (self-initiated other-repair, other-initiated other-repair, and other-initiated self-repair) operated almost exclusively on the lexicon.

Repair Strategies of Native Speakers in Ordinary Conversation

Earlier studies on conversation analysis have been done with native speakers of English. This part will discuss the native speakers' repair strategies during their talks in ordinary conversations. As the purpose of the study involves identifying the types of repair strategies in the second language classroom, these findings in ordinary conversations are important for comparison with those in a second language classroom setting.

After analysis of thousands of data, Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977) identified several types of repair techniques that native speakers most use when they encounter conversation breakdowns. Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977) findings have provided the baseline data for repair studies. Therefore, this part will examine the five repair strategies which have been cited frequently in conversation analysis literature.

When repair is initiated by someone other than the speaker of the trouble source, there are several different practices used to specify the trouble source and initiate the

repair. These include repair initiators such as ‘huh?’ or ‘what?’; wh-question words such as ‘who’, ‘where’ and ‘when’, used alone or together with a partial repeat of the trouble source turn, i.e. ‘met whom?’; the phrase ‘you mean’ plus a candidate understanding of the prior talk; and a partial repeat of the prior talk with upward intonation (Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks, 1977).

Excerpt 2.13. Huh, What?:

D: Wul did’e ever get married’r anything?

C: → Hu:h?

D: Did jee ever get married?

C: I have // no idea. (p. 367)

Excerpt 2.14. Question words who, where, when:

J: Tsk ther’s Mako: (hh)

C: → where,

J: there, (p. 368)

Excerpt 2.13 has repair initiator huh or what. This type of strategy does not specify what exactly the trouble source is. These repair initiations usually yield a repetition of the trouble source turn in the next turn as in D. Excerpt 2.14 has single question word such as who, where, or when as repair initiation. This type of strategy specifies a trouble source of prior turn.

Excerpt 2.15. Partial repeat of the trouble-source turn, plus a question word:

B: Was last night the first time your met Missiz Kelly?

(1.0)

M: → Met whom?

B: Missiz Kelly,

M: Yes. (p. 368)

Excerpt 2.16. Partial repeat of the trouble-source turn:

A: Well Monday, lemme think. Monday, Wednesday, an' Fridays I'm home by one ten.

B: → One ten?

A: Two o'clock. My class ends one ten. (p. 368)

Third type of repair initiation is a question word with partial repeat of the trouble source turn as in Excerpt 2.15. Speaker M is initiating repair for the person 'Missiz Kelly' with verb met. And speaker B is completing repair in the third turn. In Excerpt 2.16 partial repeat of the trouble source turn is used for repair initiation. This type specifies the trouble source by saying the time 'one ten' again in the second turn. Speaker A completes the repair by clarifying the time.

Excerpt 2.17. ‘You mean’ plus a possible understanding of prior turn:

A: Why did I turn out this way.

B: → You mean homosexual?

A: Yes. (p. 368)

The last type of repair initiator is ‘you mean’ plus a possible understanding of prior turn as in Excerpt 2.17. Speaker B is initiating repair to the trouble source by giving an alternate understanding of the trouble source. And A completes the repair at the next turn.

Koshik (2005) adds ‘alternative question’ to the conversation analysis literature on repair structure. An alternative question can be used to initiate repair by presenting two possible phonologically similar hearings of an element in a prior talk. Also alternative question for repair initiation is used to contrast two different items that have been confused in the prior talk, in order to clarify the meaning.

Excerpt 2.18. Kay and Daughter 2002

01 Child: I need some more blue:.

02 Mom: → you need some more blue?

03 Child: uh huh,

04 Mom: → you need some more blue:? or glue:.

05 Child: glue. (Koshik, 2005, p. 205)

In the context of Excerpt 2.18, it is clear that the daughter means ‘glue’ rather than ‘blue’. In the second line the mother initiates repair by repeating the turn. However the daughter seems to understand confirmation check. The mother in line 4 initiates repair again using an alternative question. The child completes the repair in line 5.

In the cases of research observing the natural conversations of children, researchers have found that children tend to use repair strategies more often than they simply do not responding when they encounter communication breakdown (Gallagher, 1977; Golinkoff, 1986). One common type of strategy used by young children for clarification request is the neutral request. According to Brinton and Fujiki (1989), this type includes the forms such as "Huh?," "What?," "I didn't understand that." and "Pardon me?" These forms indicate that they have difficulties in understanding interlocutor’s dialogue, but they do not specify the trouble source that caused the difficulty.

Much of the research describing children's repair strategies have involved children’s responses to clarification requests (Brinton, Fujiki, Loeb, & Winkler, 1986; Gallagher. 1977, 1981; Konefal & Fokes. 1984; Scherer & Coggins, 1982; Spilton & Lee, 1977; Wilcox & Webster, 1980). The ability to produce and respond to requests for clarification develops gradually and systematically in the course of the preschool and elementary school years (Brinton, Fujiki, Loeb & Winkler, 1986). Brinton, Fujiki, Loeb, & Winkler (1986) explored children’s ability to answer sequences of clarification requests by examining their responses to three consecutive non-specific requests. Repairs were categorized into five categories; repetition, revision, additions, cues, inappropriate. When children repeat all or part of his/her original utterance, it is

considered as repetition. The revision category included repair that alternate the form containing same content. When children added specific information to the original utterance, it is considered as additions. When children offered background context to the original message, it is categorized as cues. Children's utterance which is off the topic is considered as inappropriate. They found that all children responded appropriately to the first request, but to the second and third requests younger children responded less frequently than older children did. While younger children mainly use repetition, older children respond with a variety of sophisticated methods for dealing with the difficulties. Brinton, Fujiki, Loeb & Winkler concluded that these differences were not due to the younger children's lack of repair strategies but to their lack of flexibility to try a different repair strategy.

Repair Strategies of Language Learners in Classroom Settings

The research on interaction between native speakers and nonnative speakers in institutional settings have been conducted with oral language proficiency interviews (Lazaraton, 1992; Riggenbach, 1991; Ross & Berwick, 1992; Young, 1995). Lazaraton (1992) compared the conversations in language interviews and conversations in ordinary settings and found that there were structural similarities as well as sequential differences between the two forms of talk. Results indicated that the organizations of sequence in interview were similar with those of ordinary talk. Differences were found in the responsibility for initiating the sequences and the forms of the initiations. According to study of Riggenbach (1991), very few repair initiations were observed in the dialogues

in interview settings. The students who rated higher grades initiated repair and the ones who had lower grades did not initiate repair in the interview settings.

Few studies deal with the repair strategies employed by students (Egbert, 1998; Liebscher & Dailey-O'cain, 2003). Egbert (1998) studied the types of repair initiations the learner actually employed in dyadic interviews. She examined the interviews in which a language instructor interviewed American college students at the end of their first year of instruction in German. She categorizes six types of repair initiation: five types observed by Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977) in ordinary English conversation and an additional type - requests for repetition. Among these six types of repair initiation, partial repeats and understanding check, the simplest strategies that can be transformed from learners' native language, are the most common student-initiated repair types. Students do not use some repair types such as interrogatives and partial repeats with question words because those repairs require a combination of cognitive, linguistic, and interactive skills which may not yet be highly developed.

Liebscher & Dailey-O'cain (2003) analyzed the data in an applied linguistics seminar for advanced learners of German. The teacher and all the students were competent enough to take part in an upper-level content-based seminar. With their data they categorized seven types of repair initiation to which they added one more from Egbert (1998)'s typology: request for definition, translation or explanation. They compared the repair organization between advanced learners of German and their teacher and found that students and teacher use different repair types. According to the study these differences occur due to their role perception within the classroom. Students

show a preference for more specific repair initiation techniques when interacting with the teacher. Students use this type "to avoid committing face-threatening acts that would seem inappropriate to their role in the classroom as learners" (p. 387).

Comeau & Genesee (2001) identified the types and frequencies of bilingual children's repair strategies during dyadic communication. Their study extended the scope on monolingual children's conversational skills in observing that even before children acquire their native language fully, they attain relatively high levels of communicative competence. Comeau & Genesee's study showed that not only monolingual children but also bilingual children master important conversational skills, such as the ability to repair communication breakdowns, and they are capable of responding differentially to various types of feedback.

In the study of conversational repair in institutional settings, researchers have also focused on the teacher's repair strategies. Lyster & Ranta (1997) examined the teacher's feedback in French immersion setting. Results included the frequency distribution of the six different feedback types used by the four teachers and those are recasts (55%) elicitation (14%), clarification requests (11%), metalinguistic feedback (8%), explicit correction (7%), and repetition of error (5%). Recasts were the most widely used technique.

Panova & Lyster (2002) presented the teacher's patterns of error treatment in an adult ESL classroom. They added one more category, translation to the categories suggested by Lyster & Ranta (1997). Of the seven types of feedback, recasting and translation of learner errors were used the most frequently, and recasts occurred in more

than half of the feedback turns. However, since these studies are not directly related to our concerns with students' repair strategies, they are mentioned here merely to show what additional realms of conversational repair in classroom have been dealt with.

I have briefly reviewed the major studies that influenced my current conceptions of repair and its practices in the English as a second langue classroom setting. However, the studies on the repair strategies of students are at the beginning stage and much remains to be done. This study aims to provide further insight into repair strategies of students by examining the patterns and functions of repair employed by students in the elementary level ESL classroom.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methods used in this study. This chapter is divided into six parts. These parts are 1) the purpose of the study, 2) research questions, 3) the research site, 4) the population of interest, 5) the procedures for data collection, and 6) the instrument used to data analysis.

This study was an attempt to provide the understanding of elementary ESL students' repair strategies involving communication problems within the classroom. This study focused on the examination of conversational repair strategies found in the process of resolving communication breakdown between teacher and students at the elementary ESL classroom. When the teachers or students encounter the miscommunication they try to solve this miscommunication to gain mutual understanding. Conversation analysis aims to trace the development of intersubjectivity in an action sequence. This means that analysts trace how participants interpret each other's talks and develop a shared understanding of the conversation at the moment. The methodology of conversation analysis can be the best framework for this study on the examination of students' repair strategies. For this reason this study used mixed methodologies in data collection and analysis in order to provide a comprehensive description of the practices of second language learners' conversational repair in elementary ESL classrooms. This study combined the conversation analysis with some quantification, a combination that is

common in the studies of ethnography of communication (Saville-Troike, 1982) and second language research (Markee 2000).

Purpose

The primary purpose of this study was to share conversational repair strategies employed by elementary level ESL students in their classroom. This study investigated repair strategies that were employed by students and determined if there were differences in the usage of repair strategies by class types and students grade levels.

Research Questions

The following questions were examined in this study:

1. What are the types and frequency distributions of students' repair strategies that elementary ESL students employ in the classroom?
2. How do these types of repair strategies differ according to the class types?
3. How do these types of repair strategies differ according to the grade levels of the students?
4. What other characteristics are observed in elementary students' practices of repair in ESL classroom?

Research Site

School

The data collection occurred during the Fall of 2007 in an ESL classroom and a tutoring classroom in a suburban elementary school in Texas. The school was chosen primarily because of its diversity of students and small class size. According to the 2006-2007 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) Report, the rate of Limited English Proficiency students in that school is 16.1% which is above the district average (5.3%). In the 2006-2007 school years the elementary school has a population of approximately 600 students. The students have diverse ethnic backgrounds as African American (12.4%), Hispanic (22.3%), White (49.3%), Native American (0.3%) and Asian/Pacific Islander (15.6%). Most students in ESL classroom are new arrivals from all over the world. These students with diverse linguistic and cultural background, rely heavily upon their second language for communication among themselves (Kinginger, 1995). This diverse class maximized the repair using the second language.

Two different kinds of English lessons, regular ESL classes with the ESL teacher and ESL tutoring classes led by volunteers, were provided to the ESL students in the elementary school. Based on the results from oral language proficiency and standardized achievement tests, students were selected to receive additional instruction from the ESL teacher in a small group setting. These selected students were pulled out for ESL classes during their regular class hours according to grade level. Each class consisted of no more than four students. Depending on their level, some ESL students had extra tutoring from the ESL teachers or tutors according to proficiency level. The elementary school had a

program called the Celebration of Learning to provide a supportive environment for the students. The volunteers for the program were mostly from a large local university near the school and they were trained to work in one-on-one instruction or small group instruction with the academic skills specified by the teacher. Each tutoring class consisted of no more than four students.

In larger classes, a small minority of learners dominates most of the conversation whereas the majority remains silent (Foster, 1998). Thus, having the class small prevented or minimized this dominance of certain persons. In addition, this class size maximized the amount of interaction between teacher or tutors and students.

Classes

The classes in which this research was conducted were chosen based on the two potential factors influencing ESL students' practices that were class types and the students' grade levels. In order to compare the students' repair practices in classes with different class types, two different participation frameworks were selected for the investigation: (1) instruction centered classes; and (2) language related game-playing classes. The data came from twelve class hours of videotaped interactions of regular ESL class which had first and second graders together and twelve class hours of tutoring class which had third and fourth graders together.

Each ESL class consisted of a variety of activities, including reading, writing, role playing, and playing games. In Table 3.1 below, a description of the typical daily schedule of Ms. N's ESL class was provided.

Table 3.1.
Typical Daily Schedule of Ms. N's Class (September 20, 2007)

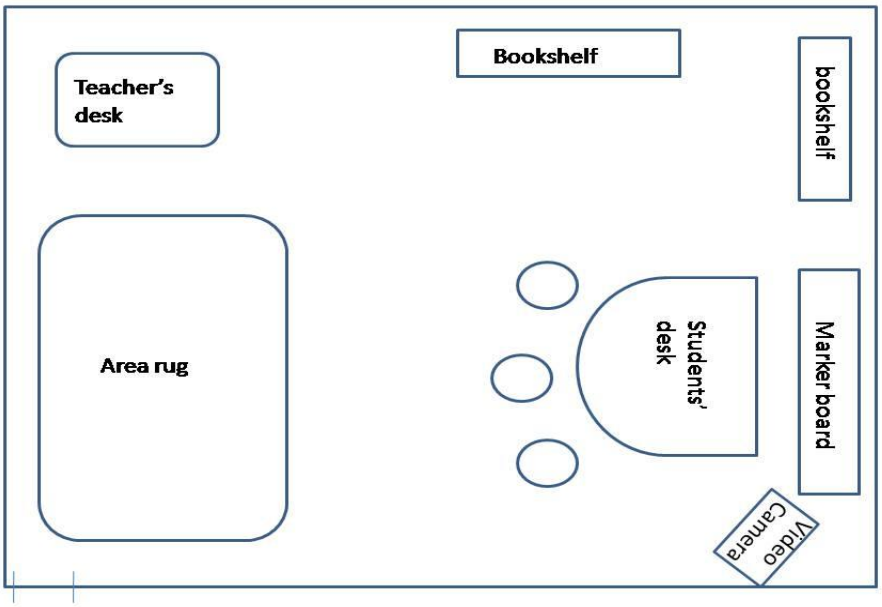
Time	Activity
8:55	Ms. N pulls out the students from their classroom.
9:05	Ms. N enters the classroom with three students LI-1, LC-1, and LC-2.
9:05-9:08	Ms. N arranges the seating of students and starts with calendar activity. They talk about the date, day of the week, month, season, weather of the day etc.
9:08-9:11	Ms. N teaches new vocabularies of that day. She teaches how to pronounce the words and how to spell them.
9: 11-9:18	Ms. N asks the class to find and highlight the new words in the workbook.
9:18-9:9:25	Ms. N asks the class to do role playing. She asks the students to pretend they are teachers and tell what they like to the students. She provides the picture chart for the students.
9:25-9:40	The class plays a board game and works a puzzle about opposite words.
9:40	Ms. N wraps up the class and leaves the classroom with students.

Ms. N had a combined class which employed instruction and game-playing in one class because she believed that the combined class would be more effective to the young students due to their attention spans. In the September twentieth class she used twenty minutes for instruction and fifteen minutes for playing games.

When it came to the physical setting of the ESL classroom, as in the Figure 3.1, at the right side of the classroom were a marker board and a big table. The teacher usually put the books, class supplies such as pencils, erasers, glues and miscellaneous papers on the tables. About three movable chairs for students were placed by the table. On the left side of the classroom there was a small portable marker board and an area rug

printed with the map of the United States for floor activities. On a side wall were bookshelves with books, dictionaries, board games, and ethnic dolls from around the world. On the walls were posted examples of students' work, a calendar of the month, a world map, and pictures representing diverse cultures. Some of these items were periodically replaced by new items throughout the semester. Most of the time the teacher used the floor where the area rug was placed for the class.

Figure 3.1.
Layout of Ms. N's ESL Classroom



Tutoring class for third and fourth graders divided into instruction class and game-playing class. Katie was a tutor in instruction classes and Amy was a tutor in game-playing classes. Katie was told about the lesson plan and was given the material before the tutoring class from Ms. N. Her class consisted of reading, writing, grammar,

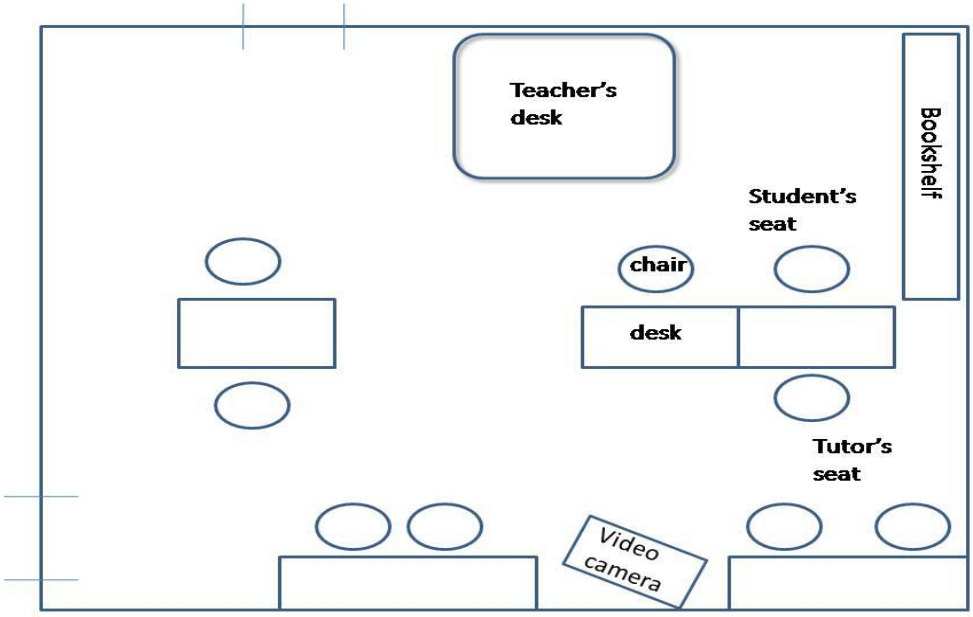
and speaking. In Table 3.2 below, a description of the typical schedule of Katie's class is provided.

Table 3.2.
Typical Schedule of Katie's Tutoring (September 20, 2007)

Time	Activity
2:00	Katie goes out to pull out the students from their classroom.
2:05	Katie enters the classroom with LK-3 and LK-4.
2:05-2:08	Katie starts with work sheets on grammar. She explains the parts of sentences; naming part and telling part and checks to see that the students understand the concepts.
2:08-2:15	The students are given a question sheet that Ms. N prepared and they are asked to write answers on it. Katie asks the students to share their answers for each question one by one. She makes grammatical corrections and provides better vocabulary. The students ask questions when they believe they are not familiar with some words in the sentences of the work sheet.
2: 15-2:35	Katie asks the students to write down or draw to describe their experience of trying to do something they never did before. The students choose to draw their ideas. Katie asks the students to share their drawing. Each student talks about their drawing. She asks questions about each student's description of his drawing to make the meaning clear.
2:35-2:40	Katie invites the students to read a page in the book. They read one page by taking turns. After they finish the book they discuss the facts in the book.
2:40-2:42	Katie wraps up the class and leaves the classroom with students.

The physical setting of the classroom for tutoring is similar with that of ESL classroom as you can see in the Figure 3.2. The only difference is the seating arrangement. There were several individual desks with two chairs for one-on-one tutoring in the center of the classroom.

Figure 3.2.
Layout of the Classroom for Tutoring



Research Participants

Selection of Participants

In order to investigate the variable of grade levels, first and second grade students' ESL class and third and fourth grade students' tutoring class were chosen. The reason for observing the tutoring class of third and fourth graders is twofold. First, it fits the goal of collecting repair practice in the second language. In the regular ESL class for the third grades all the students were from the same country and had different English proficiency levels. In the fourth graders' class two students were from the same country and their proficiency levels were different. All the students in third and fourth grade were the newcomers to the school. The students share not only a common native

language, but also a good deal of common experience as new students at the US school. As a result the students who were in lower proficiency level often chose to use their native language when they encountered communication breakdown. In order to maximize the repair practice with the second language of students this study selected the tutoring class with students of similar proficiency level. Second, one of the parents in fourth grade did not agree to her son's participation to this study. Since the school district required the researcher to conduct the study with parental permission, the researcher chose the tutoring class which had parental permission.

Teacher and Tutors

The ESL teacher, Ms. N was a native speaker of American English. She is in her fifties and has served as an ESL teacher for over fifteen years in that elementary school. Her class with first and second grade students was selected for this study. Ms. N was indicated as TN in transcript where as tutors Amy was coded as TA, and Kelly as TK.

The tutors were two volunteers from a large local university near the elementary school. They are female undergraduate students, Amy and Katie (pseudonyms), both are majoring in child development. They want to be teachers after they graduate from college. They came to the elementary school once a week and worked with ESL students with the materials presented by the ESL teacher. Katie tutored the third and fourth grader together in instruction classes, Amy tutored them in game-playing classes.

Students

Five students participated in this study. They included one Indian, two Chinese, and two Koreans. In the current academic year the school had a total of nine ESL

students. These students were from India (1), China (3), and Korea (5). The demographic information of the students was collected through the informal interviews. Their age, gender, nationality, length of stay in the US up until the data collection period, and the periods of studying English before coming to the US are as follows:

Table 3.3.
Profiles of Participants

Student	grade	Gender	Nationality	length of stay US	Amount of time studying English
LI-1	1	M	India	8 months	No
LC-1	1	F	China	8 months	No
LC-2	2	M	China	1 months	No
LK-3	3	M	Korea	1 months	3 years
LK-4	4	M	Korea	1 months	3years

As seen from Table 3.3, all the students are Asian countries and arrived in the US less than a year ago. An Indian boy LI-1 was six year-old and came to America with his family in December 2006. His mother was working at the graduate program near the local university. He had not received any education in India, and started school upon arriving America. Since he attended the previous semester at the school, he had competence for listening and speaking but he had limited vocabulary.

A Chinese girl, LC-1, was six year-old and came to America due to her father's study. She had been in the US for about eight months at the time of data collection. She didn't get any English education in her country and started learning English after she came to the US. Her oral English proficiency seemed similar with that of LI-1. A

Chinese boy, LC-2, was seven year-old who had been in the US about one month. He had not had any English education in his country and he could barely communicate with his teacher or other students in English. Most of the time the teacher asked LC-1to translate into Chinese what she said and explain it to LC-2. The ESL teacher taught those three students LI-1, LC-1, and LC-2 together.

Two Korean boys LK-3 and LK-4 were nine year-old and ten year-old, respectively. They came to the US the previous summer with their families and both of their fathers were graduate students at the local university. For three years they were exposed to English environments such as learning English as one of their school subjects. In addition to learning English at the school, they both received tutoring after school at a learning center. They demonstrated higher level of competence in reading and writing than other students but showed limited communication competence.

Data Collection

Procedures

1. The English teacher and tutors were asked in person to participate in the study and signed the consent form. Prior to the observation of the class the ESL teacher explained the study and distributed the parental permission form to her students. Only the students with parent's permission received the assent form. The researcher read and explained the assent form to the students who can not read the form. The demographic information of the students who complete the forms was collected through informal interviews.

2. The data were collected with face-to-face as well as video-camera observation. Along with the video recordings, the researcher collected data from multiple sources, including field notes and materials used in the class.
3. The videotaped data were transcribed and analyzed following conversation analysis methodology.

Video Recording of the Class

All the data were collected from September to November, 2007. Videotaping occurred at least two weeks after the beginning of the semester, because of the time required for correspondence and for the procedure of obtaining permission in each case. The researcher was present every day of the preceding week. This time in the classroom allowed the students to become used to the presence of the new person. This extended classroom presence also enabled the researcher to become familiar with the classroom routines. Fortunately, participants quickly adjusted to being videotaped, and they seemed to ignore the camera most of the time.

Artifacts

Artifacts, including the textbook, other activity materials, and board games were collected and examined. This kind of data source was useful in increasing the researcher's understanding how students use repair strategies in their classroom.

Transcription

After the conversational data were collected, tapes were repeatedly viewed and listened to. Once the instances of communication breakdown and negotiation of meaning between teacher and student were identified, relevant conversational segments were

transcribed. The data were transcribed following transcription conventions developed by Gail Jefferson (Sacks, Shegloff, and Jefferson, 1974; Atkinson & Heritage, 1984; Ochs, Shegloff, & Thompson, 1996) which have been followed by practitioners of conversation analysis. They are designed for detailed examination of conversation, which includes describing pauses, gestures, loudness, stutters, overlaps, and intonation.

Intonation is indicated by a comma (continuing intonation), a period (falling intonation), and a question mark (rising intonation). Loudness is indicated by capital letters and the beginning of soft speech or a word is indicated by a small circle (◦) on the upper corner of the left side of the first letter of the soft pronounced words. Stutter or cut-off speech is indicated by a dash (-). Pause is indicated by period between parentheses (.). Overlapping speech is indicated by a single bracket at the point of overlapping. Markedly slow talk is indicated by < > while markedly rushed talk is by > < around the talk. Rising pitch is indicated by upward arrow ↑. Text inside single parentheses, ( ), means the talk is unclear, but, the closest possible transcription has been given, and double parenthesis are used for words that are the transcriber's comments about gestures or the situation. In Table 3.4 below, a list of transcription notation was provided.

Table 3.4.
List of Transcription Conventions

Feature	Meaning	Notation
Intonation	Continuing intonation	,
	Falling intonation	.
	Rising intonation	?
Intensity	Spoken loudly	TEXT
	Spoken softly	°text
Temporal features	Word cutoff	-
	Overlapping speech	[ ]
	Pause	(.)
	Spoken slowly	<text>
	Spoken rapidly	>text<
	Lengthened syllable	: :
	Rising Pitch	↑
Transcriber's comments	Paralinguistic behavior	((behavior))
	Unclear or unintelligible speech	( )

Data Analysis

Instrument

In order to identify the students' conversational repair strategies, the operational definition of a repair strategy for this study has to be clear. This study uses the definition of repair given in some of the most influential studies of repair in ordinary conversation (Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sack, 1977; Schegloff, 1997; Ten Have, 1999), and classroom settings (Van Lier, 1988; Kasper, 1985; McHoul, 1990; Kinginger, 1995; Seedhouse, 1999). In these studies repair is defined as the treatment on the problems of hearing or understanding. It includes processes for mutual comprehension such as word search as well as a replacement or correction on hearable errors or mistakes.

Accordingly repair strategies include students' verbal or nonverbal responses to teacher's or another student's wrong, incomplete, or silent responses. They also include

students' responses that either repair the trouble directly in the same turn or initiate repair that the teacher or another student will complete.

Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks (1977) discussed other-initiated repair techniques used by native speakers of English in ordinary conversation. They were the following:

a. Repair initiators such as 'huh?' or 'what?'

b. Question words who, where, when

c. Partial repeat of the trouble source turn, plus a question word

d. Partial repeat of the trouble-source turn

e. 'You mean' plus a possible understanding of prior turn

Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks' list of repair categories was the initial motivation for this study. The practices of repair, especially in the second language classroom, are expected to differ in some ways due to the characteristics of the second language classroom and the nature of the participants (Van Lier, 1988). Thus, this study incorporated Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks's techniques with other categories which were discovered by Egbert (1998) and Liebscher & Dailey-O'cain (2003) in second language classroom. Those are requests for repetition and requests for definition, translation, or explanation.

Along with these categories, correction and nonverbal resources have been included in that they affect the meaning making process (Goodwin, 2000; Streeck & Kallmeyer, 2001). Explicit correction was suggested by Panova & Lyster (2002). Correction is used to resolve ungrammatical forms or inappropriate functions of the target language. A wide range of non-verbal actions such as bodily movement, eye-gaze, and facial expression were found in this study by the students who did not have English

proficiency. Although the participants, instructional settings and the purpose of those studies were different from those of this study, combining the categories of those studies seemed appropriate for the purpose of the present study. As the analysis of the data progressed, it became necessary to add new categories to the combined categories derived from the previous studies. Thus, the new categories for this study are the following: unspecified, interrogatives, (partial) repeat, partial repeat plus question word, understanding check, requests for repetition, request for definition, translation or explanation, correction, and nonverbal resources. In Table 3.5 below, the coding system of students repair strategies for this study was provided.

Table 3.5.
Coding System of Students' Repair Strategies for this Study

Repair Strategies	Explanations
Unspecified	Unspecified targeting such as *huh? pardon? I'm sorry? Uhm? what?*
Interrogatives	Individual question words such as *who?, where?,* or *when?,* with a slightly more specified focus on the repairable.
(Partial) Repeat	Repeats of the trouble source turn.
Partial repeat plus question word	Partial repeats of the trouble source turn with a question word.
Understanding check	Providing a possible understanding of the trouble source Explicitly saying "I don't know" or "I don't understand."
Requests for repetition	Similar to the unspecified category
Request for definition, translation, or explanation	Specifically targets that which needed to be repaired.
Correction	Related to not only linguistic errors but also comprehension of the trouble source turn.
Nonverbal	Non-linguistic response such as gesture, bodily movement, eye gaze, facial expression, hesitation pauses, and silence.

Unspecified

This type of strategy does not specify what exactly the trouble source is. (e.g. huh? pardon? I'm sorry? etc.) This repair initiation usually yields a repetition of the trouble source turn. In Excerpt 3.1 below line 6, LK-4 initiated the repair with unspecified. His initiation did not show if he did not understand the specific words or phrase or the whole of the tutor's explanation. In line 7 the tutor chose to repeat the question that she asked right before LK-4's initiation. In line 9 the LK-4's acknowledgement token "yeah" followed by correct answer to the tutor's question displayed that the trouble source was the tutor's question and the communication breakdown was solved.

Excerpt 3.1. Unspecified

1	TK:	if the telling parts of two sentences are the same, you can combine
2		the naming parts using the word. and (1.0) like for instance
3		whenever you'll go somewhere, me and Mike go somewhere (1.0)
4		right? so it says my aunt went walking I went walking then, how
5		would you put together. anyone tell me?
6→	LK-4:	uhm?
7	TK:	how would you put these two sentences together, my aunt went
8		walking I went walking
9	LK-4:	(2.0) yeah. (2.0) uhm, my aunt and I went walking.

Interrogatives

This type of strategy starts with a single question word such as who, where, or when as repair initiation. This type of strategy specifies trouble source of prior turn. In Excerpt 3.2 below LK-3 initiate repair with a single question word "who" at the line 5. To LK-3 the association Silvia with Spanish name contributed to break down the communication. Because the cultural things they don't yet understand, their lack of sociocultural knowledge was observed to contribute to the students' difficulty in understanding. LK-3's repair initiation with interrogatives was launched and the TK mended the communication problems.

Excerpt 3.2. Interrogatives

1	TK:	let's see and we are gonna read a book. have you read it before?
2	LK-3:	that's e::asy
3	TK:	easy:: i'm glad y'all think easy. ok start on the first page. this is
4		Silvia this is her papa. they are from Mexico or Spain.
5→	LK-3:	who?
6	TK:	Silvia. see the name↑ Silvia↑ they are Spanish name.

(Partial) Repeat

In repeats and partial repeats, some of the trouble source turn is used again in the repair initiation, which makes them more specific than unspecified repair initiations, though still less specific than other types to follow. In Excerpt 3.3 there were two repair initiation to the teacher TN's talk. For this category the first repair initiation was the

example in line 2. LC-1 initiated the repair with repeating the “puppet show”. That initiation displayed LC-1 wanted to make sure if he heard “puppet show” correctly in the teacher’s talk for the activity on the fun Friday. In the teacher TN’s response, the communication breakdown was solved by repeating the trouble source turn.

Excerpt 3.3. Partial Repeat

1 TN: sit down. we are not gonna have puppet show on Friday.

2→ LC-1: puppet show?

3→ LI-1: tomorrow? Yeah,[fun Friday

4 TN: [no. we are gonna keep doing work on this Friday

5 ‘cause bad behavior today. we may have it later. we are gonna

6 have puppet show (1.0) maybe next Friday.

Partial Repeat Plus Question Word

This type includes repetition of the trouble source turn with a question word. In the Excerpt 3.4 they discussed the body parts of kangaroos. Tutor TK asked the students to circle the words “back paws” and pointed where they are. However, LK-3’s repair initiation in line 6, partial repeat with a question word, indicated his loss of intersubjectvitiy. In line 7 tutor TK’s response resolved the communicative problem.

Excerpt 3.4. Partial Repeat plus Question Word

1 TK: ok. on the paper where are the back paws(.) can you circle that for

2 me? back paws?

3 LK-4: (pointing the wrong word on the worksheet)

4 TK: right here, see that? those are the back paws, they use like hands

5 see that? right there. ok, look at your little finger.

6→ LK-3: where is back paw?

7 TK: right there

8 LK-3: back paw?

9 TK: uh huh

10 LK-3: back paw

11 TK: they are called paws, dogs have little paws

Understanding Check

This type provides an alternate understanding of the trouble source. The speaker targets the trouble source more specifically than with the previous strategies. In supplying a candidate understanding, the speaker indicates his or her interpretation of the trouble source turn. Instances of the student's repair moves in which he/she offers a possible understanding or interpretation of the teacher's or other student's utterance were coded under this category. This type refers to the students' repair moves where he/she explicitly says "I don't know" or "I don't understand" to show his/her understanding problems and initiate repair. In line 4 in the Excerpt 3.5 LI-1 initiated the repair by offering a possible understanding of surprise party in the teacher TN's explanation in the line 1 to line 5. In line 6 LI-1 negotiated the meaning of the surprise party with his alternate understanding "magic". In line 7 teacher TN confirmed LI-1's comprehension was right.

Excerpt 3.5. Understanding Check

1 TN: everybody's gonna have surprise party, everybody has to be very
2 quiet, 2the person is not gonna know. Opposite of quiet is what↑
3 (3.0)
4 YEAH:: everybody says happy birthday very noisy noisy loud.
5 noisy↑ quiet.
6→ LI-1: magic?
7 TN: it's magic birthday I guess
8 LI-1: is it turning up?
9 TN: yes it is turning up. ok. Everybody needs to be really really quiet,
10 shh::: (2.0) now want to be noisy? can you be noisy WOW AH::
11 those are opposite. OK↑

In the Excerpt 3.6 they tried to read aloud the word vet and talked about its meaning. LI-1 indicated the lack of understanding and initiated repair in line 7. The teacher TN tried to give clues to her initial question in line 8.

Excerpt 3.6. Understanding Check

1 TN: ok, let's turn to the page, there's a net, catch the fish. turn to the
2 page 5. LC-1 what does that say
3 LC-1: a (1.0) met

4 TN: there's a short e sound

5 LC-1: ve ve vet

6 TN: that's right. vet what is vet?

7→ LI-1: I don't know

8 TN: look at the picture what's she have

9 LI-1: she has

10 TN: what would she have? LC-2↑

11 LI-1: Mrs. N↑ there is number sign

12 TN: yes there is. what does that? the lady have, on the table, (2.0) is

13 it pet? (2.0) it says a vet. alright, (1.0) a vet is an animal doctor.

Requests for Repetition

This type is similar to the unspecified category in that it can also yield a repetition of the trouble source turn as response. Requests for repetition are specific to the classroom of language learners. In the Excerpt 3.7 they were talking about the past tense verb forms. In line 2 LK-4's started his turn with two types of repair initiation. Unspecified was followed by and a request for repetition. Tutor TK responded with the repetition of the trouble source in her turn in line 3.

Excerpt 3.7. Request for Repetition

1 TK: ok. today I sneeze wobbly, yesterday I what the verb

2→ LK-4: uhm? one more time

3 TK: today I sneeze wobbly

4 LK-3: <sneezed>

5 TK: yeah sneezed.

6 LK-4: aha↑

Requests for Definition, Translation or Explanation

This type specifically targets what needed to be repaired. Along with the requests for repetition this type is specific to the classroom of language learners. In the Excerpt 3.8 they are reading a book. While LK-3 read the text LK-4 encountered the vocabulary problems and launched repair right after LK-3's turn. Tutor TK's explanation about the repairable dissolved the communication breakdown in the next several turns.

Excerpt 3.8. Requests for Definition, Translation or Explanation

1 TK: there you go. (to LK-3) you wanna read this?

2 LK-3: male seals and sea lions are called bulls, females are called cows,

3 their babies are called pups, the pups are usually born on land.

4→ LK-4: um, (1.0) what is female and pups, what is female and pups?

5 TK: females and pups↑

6 LK-4: yeah

7 TK: female are girls

8 LK-4: aha↑

9 TK: yeah male seals boy seals are called bulls (1.0) like big cow

10 female seals are called cows, this is a little baby called pup. I like

11 dogs you know kind little puppy, (1.0) I like that (3.0) ok

Correction

This type is related to not only linguistic errors but also comprehension of the trouble source turn. It includes pronunciation, grammar, syntax, morphology, vocabulary meaning, usage of words, and content. In line 4 LC-2 responded to his teacher with eye gaze, nonverbal way of communication. In line 5 rushed talk of LI-1 indicated that he considered LC-2's eye gazing as a repair initiation and he completed the repair at his turn.

Excerpt 3.9. Correction

1 TN: what's the opposite of new. ((to LI-1)) you are wearing new shoes.

2 LC-1: I got new shoes too.

3 TN: these shoes are not new. they are what↑

4 LC-2: ((gazing at the teacher))

5→ LC-1: <old>

6 TN: old. new↑ old, those are opposites. I'll give this card to LC-2.

Nonverbal Strategies

This category of nonverbal strategies includes students' gesture, bodily movement, eye gaze, facial expression, hesitation pauses and silence. In conversations, the speakers use place-holders such as *uh, uhm,* or *well,* in pauses or silence which are intended not to lose their turn (Rieger, 2003). These kinds of place-holders are included

in this category. In line 2 the student LC-2 is initiating repair by his eye gaze, which prompted the teacher to say it one more time in line 3.

Excerpt 3.10. Nonverbal Strategies

1	TN:	LC-2, what day of the week tomorrow?
2→	LC-2:	((patting his head with making squint eyes))
3	TN:	what's [tomorrow
4	LC-1:	[ºfri-
5	TN:	uh-oh LC-1, let's see if he can get it, what's tomorrow? (2.0) It
6		starts with f- f-
7	LI-1:	<I know I know>
8	TN:	just a minute. Let him think, just a minute
9	LC-2:	(2.0) (ºFriday)
10	TN:	see↑ LC-2 knew all his own↑

Data Analysis

With transcribed data this study identified all instances of repair initiation by students and coded them according to strategy categories. The types and frequencies of each category in each class were tabulated. Comparisons were made between the two different class types to examine whether the class type influences the students' use of repair strategies. Comparisons were also made between the two different grade levels classes to see whether the grade level differences may be a factor affecting the types and frequency distributions of the students' repair strategies.

Establishing Reliability

It is important that the coding of the categories has reliability. In order to establish reliability one female volunteer with background knowledge in second language acquisition was recruited at the initial stage of data analysis. She was an instructor in a language learning center with a master's degree in ESL. After the volunteer understood the purpose of this study, she received training in category identification. And then, the researcher picked two transcripts from each grade levels. The transcripts of the first classes of each grade level were used for comparison. Transcript from the first/second grade students' ESL class was coded first. The agreement rate was 82% for that class and some disagreements were found in the categories such as unspecified, interrogatives, and understanding check. After the discussion on the disagreements, both the researcher and volunteer achieved a 100% agreement rate for that class. Then, transcript from the third/fourth grade students' tutoring class was coded. The agreement rate was 94% for that class and the disagreements were caused by two cases of understanding check. Through their discussion the agreement was attained. In the course of reaching agreement, the researcher had a chance to reconcile her own and the volunteer's thinking as a result improved the overall quality of the coding system in that it helped the researcher clarify the scope of some categories.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter consists of four sections and provides the findings of students' repair strategies according to class types and grade levels. The first section addresses the types and frequency distributions of repair strategies that first/second and third/fourth grade students employ in the classroom. The second section presents how the practices of the students' repair strategies are influenced by class types. The third section discusses how the students' repair practices in the ESL class are influenced by grade levels. The last section provides other findings regarding the ESL students' repair strategies in elementary school.

Research Question One

What are the types and frequency distributions of students' repair strategies that elementary ESL students employ in the classroom?

This section addresses the types and frequency distributions of students' repair strategies in the ESL classroom. As mentioned in chapter III, after analyzing the data it became necessary to add new categories to the combined categories derived from previous studies. In natural conversation adult native speakers use unspecified, interrogatives, (partial) repeat, partial repeat plus question word, and understanding check for their communication repair (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977). In addition, adult language learners use requests for repetition and requests for definition, translation,

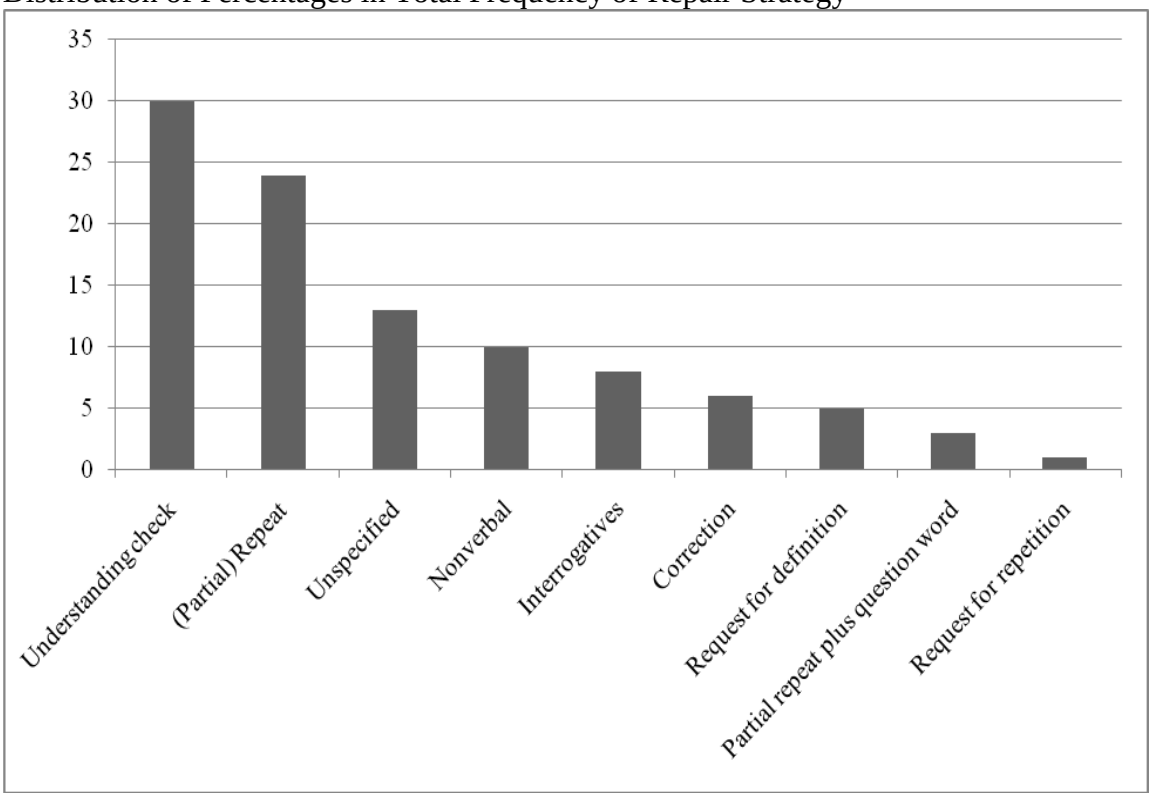
or explanation for resolving their conversation breakdown (Egbert, 1998; Liebscher & Dailey-O'cain, 2003). As the analysis of the data progressed, correction and nonverbal resources were included for this study. Thus, the new categories for this study are the following: unspecified, interrogatives, (partial) repeat, partial repeat plus question word, understanding check, requests for repetition, request for definition, translation or explanation, correction, and nonverbal resources. Table 4.1 presents the frequency distribution of each strategy type.

Table 4.1.
Frequency Distribution of Students' Repair Strategies

Repair Strategies	Total
Unspecified	76
Interrogatives	46
(Partial) Repeat	144
Partial repeat plus question word	17
Understanding check	177
Request for repetition	5
Request for definition, translation or explanation	32
Correction	33
Nonverbal	59
Total	589

The students in this study used nine types of repair strategies. The most frequently used strategy was understanding check, which yielded 177 cases. Partial repeat showed the second highest frequency with occurrences of 144 cases. Request for repetition was the lowest in frequency, which was found in 5 cases. Distribution of the percentages from largest to smallest frequency of each repair strategy is presented in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1.
Distribution of Percentages in Total Frequency of Repair Strategy



Understanding check comprised 30% (N=177) and partial repeat accounted for 24% (N=144) of the total practices. Percentages of unspecified and nonverbal were 13% (N=76) and 10% (N=59), respectively. Students using the interrogative made up 8% (N=46) of the total repair practices and correction 6% (N=33). Request for definition was used 5% (N=32) of the time and partial repeat plus question word was used 3% (N=17). The least used strategy was request for repetition, with 1% (N=5) of practices.

The conversation between the teacher and the students in the ESL class was characterized by frequent multiple repair sequences of understanding checks. Excerpt 4.1 shows the multiple sequences of understanding checks. The context of this sequence

was that they were practicing position words. The teacher, TN, drew a birdhouse on the board and asked one student to mark a star under the birdhouse on the board and asked two other students to highlight the word “under” on their worksheet.

Excerpt 4.1. Understanding Check

1	TN:	LC-1, come show me where. make a star under the birdhouse
2→	LC-1:	under?
3	TN:	under the birdhouse
4	LC-1:	((making a star under the birdhouse drawn on the board))
5→	LI-1:	((pointing the word on his paper)) is it under?
6	TN:	right. under the birdhouse
7→	LI-1:	where the under?
8	TN:	that’s under the birdhouse
9→	LI-1:	are we spell that?
10	TN:	I need you highlight under on your paper. the bird is under-
11→	LI-1:	is this one?
12	TN:	that is the one. you highlight right there. under (4.0) you did it.

As you can see in lines 2, 5, 7, 9, and 11, there were five instances of repair initiation in Excerpt 4.1. In line 2, the student LC-1 used repeat on the teacher’s statement and the teacher, TN repeated the trouble source in line 3. As she marked a star on the board, it seems that her problem was resolved. The rest of the four times of repair initiation was

yielded by LI-1, who seemed like he could not find the word “under” on his paper, but after four attempts he finally followed the teacher’s direction.

Excerpt 4.2 is another example of a repair sequence with frequent use of understanding check.

Excerpt 4.2. Understanding Check

1	TN:	let me see down there, see the windmill↑ look at that, here, that’s
2		mill.
3→	LI-1:	((pointing to the sticker on the wall)) can I take it?
4	TN:	no, leave it right there, do you know what mill makes? (2.0) they
5		make flo::ur
6→	LI-1:	are we gonna make flours?
7	TN:	well, we can make gingerbread man on Friday
8→	LI-1:	tomorrow?
9	TN:	no, another fun Friday
10	LI-1:	NO
11	TN:	it’s coming soon. tomorrow you’ll have some snacks with honey,
12→	LC-1:	can I have it?
13	TN:	we are gonna have crackers made out of this flour
14	LC-1:	((pointing to the flour in a ziplock under the picture)) why is?
15	TN:	((showing the flour to the students)) I’m gonna show you what I
16		brought today. this is flour made at the mill
17→	LC-1:	is it [real?

18→ LI-1: [can I see it?

19 TN: shh:: we will do that later ok?

The teacher talked about the pictures on the wall that illustrated the story "Rosie's walk". Under the picture there were samples of hay, flour, and honey, which were in the illustrations. In this sequence there were six repair initiations by the students in lines 3, 6, 8, 12, 17, and 18. It seems that the students were distracted by the samples under the pictures and did not pay attention to the teacher's statements.

The second highest strategy that was observed frequently was partial repeat. Unlike the understanding check, the partial repeat did not yield lengthy sequences. Most of the time the problem was resolved at the next turn. Excerpt 4.3 is an example of partial repeat.

Excerpt 4.3. Partial Repeat

1 LK-4: which means useless and hind?

2 TK: hind? uhm,hind means the back

3→ LK-4: back?

4 TK: uh huh. and useless means that they don't have any use, they don't

5 work, they don't have any purpose

In line 3 LK-4 initiated repair by repeating the word "back" from the tutor's dialogue. By the affirmation of tutor in line 4 the problem was resolved.

Excerpt 4.4. Partial Repeat

1 TK: ok what place has palace, you remember?

2 LK-3: France

3 LK-4: where?

4 TK: the palace the pretty big castle

5→ LK-4: um. castle?

6 TK: uh huh

7 LK-4: china

Excerpt 4.4 is another example of a short repair sequence with partial repeat. It seems that LK-4 wanted to make sure what he heard by repeating the word "castle". His answer in line 7 indicates that his problem was resolved.

Research Question Two

How do these types of repair strategies differ according to class types?

This section is divided into two parts. The first part presents the first/second grade students' repair strategies in two different types of classes. Then, the third/fourth grade students' repair strategies in two types of classes will be presented.

Class Types and First/Second Grade Students' Repair Strategies

The class of first/second grade students was a combination of an instruction and a game-playing, due to the young students' attention spans. The teacher used five to ten

minutes more for the instruction in each class. Table 4.2 presents the frequency distribution of first/second graders' repair strategies in two classes.

Table 4.2.
First/Second Graders' Repair Strategies in Two Types of Class

Repair Strategies	First/Second Grader	
	Instruction	Game-playing
Unspecified	7	3
Interrogatives	12	1
(Partial) Repeat	23	**22**
Partial repeat plus question word	9	4
Understanding check	**78**	**31**
Request for repetition	0	0
Request for definition, translation or explanation	0	0
Correction	27	1
Nonverbal	**43**	9
Total	**199**	**71**

In the instruction class students used a total of 199 repair practices, and among them understanding check turned out to be the most frequently used repair strategy. Its frequency was 78 cases and 41% of the total practices. Nonverbal was the second highest in frequency with 43 cases, which was 23% of the total. Correction and partial repeat showed similar frequency with 27 cases (14%) and 23 cases (12%), respectively. Interrogative and partial repeat with question word had 12 cases and 9 cases, respectively. Request for repetition and request for definition, translation, or explanation were not used in this grade level.

In the game-playing class there was a total of 71 cases of repair practices. Among them, understanding check was the most frequently used with 31 cases, which was 44%

of the total. Partial repeat was the second highest in frequency with 22 cases, which was 31% of the total. Nonverbal was the third highest in frequency with 9 cases, which was 13% of the total. Partial repeat plus question word and unspecified showed similar frequency with 4 cases and 3 cases each. Correction was used only in 1 case and request for repetition, request for definition, translation, or explanation was not used in this grade.

The most outstanding difference between students' repair strategies in the two class types is the fact that the total number of the repair strategies in the instruction class was 180% more in the game-playing class. The difference of the total number of the repair practices between instruction and game-playing classes can be seen in the Table 4.2. Even though the ESL teacher allowed five to ten more minutes for instruction in each class, the total number of repair practices in the instruction class was more than double the number of the total in the game-playing class. It can be inferred that the reason may lie in the difference of the students' attention span in different contexts. Unlike the instruction class, during the game-playing class students focused on the process of playing the game rather than completing a task, and as a result the game-playing class had less repair practices due to non-hearing or non-understanding.

Excerpt 4.5 and 4.6 below contrast the number of repair practices of two different types of classes. Excerpt 4.5 was from the instruction class of the second day, which had more repair practices (16 cases) than the game-playing class (5 cases).

Excerpt 4.5. Instruction in the Second Class

1 TN: at the end of the class, we are going to have game if we work very
2 hard. you need play games with about opposites. Alright↑ let's
3 look at our words, um, you have. [group one
4→ LC-1: [can I read?
5 TN: can you look at that one?
6→ LI-1: group one?
7 TN: group one, yes. ok, I am going to put a word up, and I need to see
8 the-. we are gonna see how many words you know in group one.
9 would you highlight group one? LI-1↑ show them. highlight group
10 one, right there. can you do that? highlight with your pen [group
11 one just go
12→ LI-1: [I, (I need)
13 TN: ((to LI-1)) let me show you how do that, the rest go all the way
14 across. (1.0) everyone need to highlight, says group one. can you
15 do that? LC-2↑can you highlight group one? with your yellow
16 pen↑
17→ LC-2: ((just look down the worksheet))
18 TN: highlight group one with yellow pen just like LI-1 did. (2.0) good.

There were several communication breakdowns in Excerpt 4.5. The first breakdown was found with the understanding check, which indicated that the student was not only to

asking if the teacher wanted the words of group one read, but also that she wanted to read (in line 4). The second breakdown was observed in line 6 with repeating the trouble source by another student, LI-1. The third repair was initiated in line 12 by LI-1 again and fourth repair was in line 17 with a nonverbal strategy by LC-2.

Excerpt 4.6. Game-playing in the Second Class

1	TN:	ok it's LI-1's turn now. LI-1, see if you can find two opposites
2	LI-1:	((flipping over the card))
3	TN:	what is that?
4	LI-1:	pants
5	TN:	it's the front, front of the pants. If you can find the back of the
6		pants,(1.0) it's not. full, isn't it? it's your turn LC-2. what is that?
7		what is he doing. sit. sit. what's opposite of sit you all?
8	LC-1:	stand up
9	TN:	stand. see if you can find stand. oh↓ not again. that's fast. ok, your
10		turn LC-1. what is that? back of the pants? remember? the front of
11		the pants↑ (1.0) she got a match. ok you got a pair.
12→	LC-2:	((collecting the card on the side))
13	TN:	no, leave it there.
14	LC-2:	((chuckle))
15	TN:	no, it's not funny. LC-2 look at me. no. ok?

On the same day they were playing a word puzzle with opposites, as described in Excerpt 4.6. The student LC-2 initiated repair with a nonverbal strategy to indicate his non-understanding, and the other students were focusing on finding the opposite words and did not produce any repair words.

Excerpts 4.7 and 4.8 contrasted the frequencies of repair practices in two different classes in the third day.

Excerpt 4.7. Instruction in the Third Class

1	TN:	alright, you ready? I need your eyes. ready? remember you need
2		to think which one of these you want to be at our puppet show.
3		ok? just be thinking. don't say loud yet.
4→	LI-1:	I know. I know
5	TN:	just a minute, just be thinking. the three bears. once upon a time
6→	LI-1:	I know. I know.
7	TN:	tell me at the end ok? ((she reads the book "the three bears"))
8→	LI-1:	what's goldilocks?
9	TN:	((showing the picture at the book)) this is goldilocks, here. she is a
10		little girl. she has golden hair
11→	LI-1:	he has bears?
12	TN:	she went to the bear's house, ok? ((keep reading the book))

Excerpt 4.8. Game-playing in the Third Class

1	TN:	alright, are you ready to put some words together on your very
2		own? alright. we are going to find the cards I'll give you all some
3		cards and we are gonna see if you put together to make new
4		words. you know what↑ this is already. what is it.
5	LC-1:	mingo
6	LI-1:	bee::
7	TN:	bee but there's only two letters there is [missing
8→	LI-1:	[is this a puzzle?
9	TN:	it's kind of puzzle. you have three cards

In the game-playing class students' attention was focused on finding the card of the missing letter, and students did not produce as many repair practices as in the instruction class. In lines 4, 6, 8, and 11 of Excerpt 4.7 repair practices were initiated by LI-1 in the instruction class while a single repair initiation was found in line 8 of Excerpt 4.8.

Class Types and Third/Fourth Grade Students' Repair Strategies

The third/fourth grade students had two types of classes on separate days. Table 4.3 presents the frequency distribution of the third/fourth grade students' repair strategies in both classes.

Table 4.3.
Frequency Distribution of the Third/Fourth Graders' Repair Strategy in Two Types of Class

Repair Strategies	Third/Fourth Graders	
	Instruction	Game-playing
Unspecified	**49**	16
Interrogatives	24	9
(Partial) Repeat	**38**	**62**
Partial repeat plus question word	4	0
Understanding check	32	**36**
Request for repetition	2	3
Request for definition, translation, or explanation	16	16
Correction	3	2
Nonverbal	4	3
Total	**172**	**135**

In instruction class, third/fourth grade students used a total 172 cases of repair strategies. Among them unspecified was the most with 49 cases, which was 28% of the total. Partial repeat and understanding check were the second and third highest in frequency with 38 cases (22%) and 32 cases (19%), respectively. Interrogative accounted for 14% of total occurrences with 24 cases, and request for definition, translation, or explanation made up 9% of total practices with 16 cases. Both partial repeat plus question word and nonverbal were used in 4 cases. Correction was the lowest in frequency in this grade.

In the game-playing class, third/fourth grade students had 135 cases of total repair practices. Partial repeat turned out to be the most frequently used repair strategy in third/fourth grade students. It was presented in 62 cases, which was 46% of total. Understanding check was used in 36 cases, which was the second highest in frequency with 27% of total. Unspecified and request for definition, translation, or explanation

showed the same occurrences of 16 cases and a percentage of 12%. Interrogative, request for repetition, nonverbal, correction showed 9, 3, 3, and 2 cases, respectively. Partial repeat plus question word was not used in this grade.

Like the repair practices of first/second grade students, instruction class produced more amounts of conversational repair than game-playing class. The frequency distribution of each repair strategy was different in both types of classes. The third/fourth grade students employed unspecified the most frequently in the instruction class, and partial repeat the most in the game-playing class.

Careful examination of the unspecified strategy in Table 4.4 revealed that in the first instruction class it was used the most (23 cases) and its frequency decreased in the last class (2 cases).

Table 4.4.
Frequency Distribution of Students' Repair Strategies in the Third/fourth Grade Instruction

Repair strategies	Class						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Unspecified	**23**	**7**	**9**	**6**	**2**	**2**	**49**
Interrogatives	3	2	5	6	2	6	24
(partial) repeat	2	9	9	6	4	8	**38**
Partial repeat plus question word	0	0	0	1	3	0	4
Understanding check	5	7	9	2	1	8	32
Request for repletion	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Request for definition, translation or explanation	0	0	13	0	3	0	16
Correction	1	0	2	0	0	0	3
Nonverbal	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
Total	34	27	51	21	15	24	**172**

The two boys had been at the American school for four weeks at the time of data collection and were not familiar with the speech patterns or pronunciations of a native

speaker. As a result, relatively simple strategies such as unspecified and (partial) repeat were used most frequently to yield repetition of the trouble source, which they couldn't catch the meaning of on the previous turn.

Excerpt 4.9 shows third/fourth grade students' repair initiations to the unfamiliar speech of a native speaker in an instruction class. In lines 2, 4, and 14 it seems that LK-4 could not understand tutor TK's meaning due to the unfamiliar speech of the native speaker.

Excerpt 4.9. Unspecified to Unfamiliar Speech

1	TK:	alright, we get to read a book today. have you been at a zoo?
2→	LK-4:	uh?
3	TK:	have you been at the zoo?
4→	LK-4:	((shrug his shoulder))
5	LK-3:	yes
6	TK:	you've been in the zoo?
7	LK-3:	yes
8	LK-4:	yes
9	TK:	did you see animals in there?
10	LK-3:	my Korean school field trip
11	TK:	oh↓ you went there field trip?
12	LK-3:	yes
13	TK:	did you see the sea lions?

14→ LK-4: uhm?

15 LK-3: yes

16 TK: you see the sea lions?

17 LK-4: ah::

The first problem was not resolved by the tutor's repetition of the trouble source in line 3, and the student LK-4 tried to initiate repair with nonverbal again in line 4. After observing the interaction between LK-3 and the tutor TK, LK-4 finally resolved the problem. In line 14 he encountered a similar problem due to the tutor's unfamiliar speech. Given the repetition of the trouble source LK-4 developed mutual understanding with the tutor TK.

Excerpt 4.10 shows the repair initiation using unspecified to the unfamiliar vocabulary in the instruction class.

Excerpt 4.10. Unspecified to Unfamiliar Vocabulary

1 TK: listen. today I row the boat yesterday what verb form?

2 LK-3: rowed

3 TK: rowed the boat

4→ LK-4: um?

5 TK: rowed the boat

6→ LK-4: ((show the word rowed to TK)) this?

7 TK: uh huh.

Student LK-4 did not know the word “rowed” and initiated repair with unspecified in line 4, which yielded the tutor’s repetition of the trouble source. Understanding check in line 6 proved that his problem was caused by the word “rowed”.

In the game-playing class, third/fourth grade students’ uses of repair strategies were caused by their unfamiliarity with native speakers’ speech, pronunciations, vocabulary, or expressions. Even though they were exposed to the English environment, they were newcomers to the school in the US. As a result, relatively simple strategies such as unspecified and partial repeat were used frequently to yield repetition of the trouble source, which was that they couldn’t catch the meaning of the previous turn.

Excerpt 4.11. Repeat to the Unfamiliar Vocabulary

1	TA:	ok. you throw first (3.0) two. pull a card what is it
2	LK-3:	cheap ((pronounced as chep)) things
3	TA:	cheap things
4→	LK-3:	cheap things?
5	TA:	you know what cheap things are?
6	LK-3:	yes
7	TA:	ok things that cheap
8→	LK-3:	cheap?
9	TA:	yeah
10	LK-3:	(3.0) yummy

11 TA: yummy? yummy is like something taste. cheap would be like
12 something doesn't cost very much, takes little bit of money.
12 LK-3: yeah
13 TA: like um (1.0) piece of candy is cheap stuff like that it doesn't cost
14 very much money. do you think something? no?
15 LK-3: yes
16 TA: think something that doesn't cost very much money
17 LK-3: (5.0) yes
18 TA: um. what about, you go into the store and put your quarter into a
19 machine and turn the dial↑ and something came out, like gumball
20 machine↑
21 LK-3: (3.0) I don't know
22 TA: you don't know? ok we'll pick another one. it's ok, pick another
23 card.

Excerpt 4.11 shows that LK-3 had trouble with the unfamiliar vocabulary "cheap". He initiated first in line 4 with a repeat strategy. According to the TA's confirmation check it seemed that his problem was resolved by his response with affirmative marker "yes" in line 6. However, repair initiation with repeat again in line 8 and response in line 10 showed that he was still having a problem with the word "cheap". Though the tutor TA's extended the explanation from line 11 to 20 about the

meaning “cheap,” LK-3 failed to understand. His communication breakdown was not resolved in Excerpt 4.11, and instead they chose to change the topic.

Excerpt 4.12. Repeat to the Non-understanding

1 TA: no it’s not. we are gonna think of a word as on the card and put your
2 marker on the first letter of the word like, if your card says vegetable
3 try to think of a word vegetable like tomato and then you, you put the
4 marker on t
5→ LK-4:vegetable? t?
6 TA: yeah vegetables are tomato potato lettuce something like that
7 LK-4:aha

Excerpt 4.12 shows that LK-4 used repeat to resolve the non-understanding of the tutor’s direction. After the tutor TA explained the instructions of the game, LK-4 started initiation with partial repeat of trouble sources “vegetable” and “t”. After the response of the tutor TA’s additional explanation, LK-4 displays his understanding with acknowledgement token “aha” in line 7.

Excerpt 4.13. Repeat to the Unfamiliar Expression

1 TA: you got a lucky hand you won again you are lucky
2→ LK-3: lucky hand?
3 TA: yup. cause you have lucky hand you won again

4 LK-3: aha. lucky hand

In Excerpt 4.13, student LK-3 used the repeat strategy for the unfamiliar expression. After LK-3 won the game two times in a row, the tutor TA told the LK-3 that he had a lucky hand.

Excerpt 4.14. Unspecified to Non-hearing

1 TA: ok, you play this game before?

2→ LK-4: uh?

3 TA: have you played this game before?

4 LK-4: I played but I don't know this game

5 TA: oh I've never played. you probably win. ok. put this one here

Excerpt 4.14 is an example of unspecified used for non-hearing. Student LK-4's response to the TA's words indicated that he had problem hearing the previous words. Upon the unspecified strategy the TA repeated the trouble source in line 3. LK-4's answer to the question in line 4 showed that the problem was resolved.

Research Question Three

How do these types of repair strategies differ according to the grade levels of the students?

This section consists of three parts and presents how the practices of the students' repair strategies are influenced by the grade levels of the students. The first part briefly describes the first/second grade students repair strategies. Secondly, third/fourth grade students repair strategies are presented. Then, the descriptions of the differences of repair strategies in the two grade levels are discussed.

First/Second Grade Students and the Practices of Students' Repair Strategies

The class schedule of the first/second class was from 9:00 am to 9:40 am everyday. It had three students, one second grader and two first graders. One second grade student was a newcomer to the United States and had no experience studying English in his country, China. He needed to start learning English from the beginning with the first graders in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Two of the students in the first/second grade class were Chinese and the other student was Indian. Their class was a combination of an instruction and a game-playing. The frequency distribution of students' repair strategies in the first/second grade class are given in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5.
Frequency Distribution of First/Second Grade Students' Repair Strategies by Instruction and Game-playing Class

Repair strategies	Class												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	**Total**
Unspecified	0	1	0	1	3	1	1	3	1	0	0	0	**12**
Interrogatives	2	1	0	1	0	0	3	3	2	0	1	0	**13**
(partial) repeat	6	3	4	3	5	0	4	4	3	4	3	7	**44**
Partial repeat plus question word	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	**13**
Understanding check	8	8	5	23	7	1	13	10	6	10	9	7	**109**
Request for repetition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Request for definition, translation or explanation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Correction	9	1	2	3	4	0	2	1	2	2	2	0	**28**
Nonverbal	4	7	6	7	5	8	1	4	4	4	0	2	**52**
Total	**29**	**21**	**21**	**42**	**24**	**10**	**24**	**26**	**20**	**20**	**16**	**17**	**270**

First/second grade students used repair strategies in a total of 270 cases. 40% of the total practices were understanding check, with 109 cases. Nonverbal was 19% of the total, which occurred in 52 cases, and partial repeat comprised 16% of the total with 44 cases. Interrogatives and partial repeat plus question word showed both had 13 cases and made up 5% of the total. Unspecified appeared in 12 cases and accounted for 4% of the total. In first/second grade students request for repetition and request for definition, translation, or explanation were not used at all. Further discussion of that will be presented in the next part. The reason why understanding check was the most frequently used (40%) in the first/second grade students' class may lie in the cognitive ability of younger children. Because the cognitive ability is restricted, an especially young child cannot maintain focus on a particular task for long time periods. Furthermore, second language learners need much more attention to produce and comprehend in their second

language than in their first language. Consequently, repair practices such as understanding check occur frequently in young children's language classroom.

Excerpt 4.15. Understanding Check

1 TN: where's the chicken in the farm? ((watching the pictures posted on
2 the wall)) it's barn, the farmers store hay, this is a hay stack right
3 here ((showing the students real hay she brought)) this is what
4 hays look like, cows and horses like to eat hay, this is the hay stack,
5→ LI-1: is that the leaves thing?
6 TN: it's hay
7→ LI-1: does that to eat?
8 TN: they cut and let it dry, it goes like that ok↑ and then put it in bail a big
9 round bail
10→ LI-1: are they gonna to eat?
11 TN: let me tell you this, this is the hay stack

In Excerpt 4.15 the student LI-1 could not pay attention to what teacher TN was saying in line 8 because he kept asking understanding checks if the animals eat the hay in lines 5, 7, and 10.

Excerpt 4.16. Understanding Check

1	TN:	ok, look at the next word, this word go ends with and s what is go
2		ends with s? s s
3	LC-1:	goes
4	TN:	it sounds like this goes
5	LC-1:	goes
6	TN:	LI-1 goes back to class in ten minutes. ok↑ goes, it pronounce
7		goes (1.0) bu::t there's e in there. can you find the word goes? in
8		your paper↑ in your sentence↑ if you can find the word goes
9→	LI-1:	this?
10	TN:	yes, highlight it, LC-2↑ do you see the word goes on your
11		paper? (2.0) you already highlighted it, ok.good.
12→	LI-1:	is this word goes?
13	TN:	yes it is, great job.

In the Excerpt 4.16, the student LI-1 initiated repair with understanding check in line 9. The launched repair with rising intonation indicated that LI-1 had an understanding problem and he was not sure of the teacher's direction. The teacher TN provided an affirmative response in line 10, but again LI-1 did not pay attention to the teacher and initiated repair in line 12.

Excerpt 4. 17. Understanding Check

1	TN:	you know what? tomorrow I'm gonna bring you a snack, we will
2		put some honey on crackers, would you all like that? graham
3		crackers with some honey↑
4→	LI-1:	can I eat it now?
5	TN:	not today, tomorrow. ok?
6→	LC-1:	I want to eat them, tomorrow we meet and eat it?
7	TN:	let me see down there, see the windmill↑ look at that, here,
8	LI-1:	((pointing to the sticker on the wall)) can I take it?
9	TN:	no, leave it right there, do you know what mill makes? (2.0) they
10		make flo::ur
11→	LI-1:	are we gonna make flours?
12	TN:	well, we can make ginger bread man
13→	LI-1:	tomorrow?
14	TN:	no, another fun Friday

In Excerpt 4.17, the students LI-1 and LC-1 seem to pay attention to the crackers the teacher would bring next class. In line 4 the student LI-1 misheard when the teacher will bring the snack and initiated repair with understanding check. In line 6 the student LC-1 wanted to make sure her understanding of the teacher's words was correct. Again in line 11 LI-1 misheard the teacher's words and asked if his understanding was correct. In line 12 the teacher answered that they are going to make a gingerbread man with flour.

In line 3 LI-1's repair initiation with understanding check was resolved by the teacher's additional information in line 14.

Nonverbal was the second highest strategy (19%) in frequency distribution in the first/second graders. Nonverbal repair strategy was used most of time by LC-2 who came to the US one month ago. Since he did not learn English before he came to America, nonverbal was his only strategy at the beginning of the semester. Excerpt 4.18 is an example of a nonverbal strategy used by LC-2.

Excerpt 4.18. Nonverbal

1	TN:	LC-2 do you remember this one? ((to LC-2 pointing at her front))
2		this is the front, the opposite (1.0) ((turning around and showing
3		her back)) this is- this is the what↑ front ↑ b- b-
4→	LC-2:	(˚indistinct sound)
5	TN:	((showing her back)) this is what↑ this is called what↑ ok, [tell me
6	LC-1:	[back
7	TN:	this is your back, ok? front↑ back, front↑ back. ok, (1.0) let's see
8		if we can find more for LC-2 ok. LC-2↑ let's see (1.0) this one,
9		ok. let's see LC-2, what color is this?
10	LC-2:	(2.0) b- black
11	TN:	g::ood, what's that color?
12	LC-2:	white
13	TN:	oh yeah↑ you know the colors. colors can be opposites, black↑ and

14 white. opposites, very good LC-2, ok

In line 4 the student LC-2's repair initiation with indistinct sound indicated that he had a problem understanding the teacher. In line 5 his teacher TN provided the trouble source one more time. However, LC-1 replaced the turn of LC-2 by explicit correction in line 6.

Excerpt 4.19. Nonverbal

1	TN:	look, look LC-2, LC-1. what is this word?
2	LC-1:	purple
3	TN:	pu- pu- pur::ple, good. LC-2, you know this word here?
4→	LC-2:	((staring other place while scratching his head))
5	TN:	what color
6	LI-1:	brown
7	TN:	let's give him a minute. this is brown, this is brown
8	LC-2:	(1.0) brown
9	TN:	good, LC-2

In Excerpt 4.19 they were talking about color words. In line 4 the student LC-2 initiated repair with a nonverbal strategy. The initiation was completed by another student LI-1's correction in line 6.

Excerpt 4. 20. Nonverbal

1	TN:	LC-2, what is this word
2→	LC-2:	(…)
3	TN:	do you know this word? (1.0) bat↑
4→	LC-2:	((shaking his head))
5	TN:	LC-2, do you like to play baseball? (pretending holding a bat))
6		you have a ball and this is the bat here. that's the one kind of bat,
7		isn't it? that's a bat and also mammal is a bat which stay in caves
8→	LC-2:	((bothering LC-1 sat by him))
9	LC-1:	STOP IT. Tomorrow we cannot play games
10	TN:	that's just fine LC-1. do you understand? b a t. bat. you
11		understand what it is?
12	LC-2:	((nodding his head))

In Excerpt 4.20, the student LC-2 used nonverbal three times in lines 2, 4, and 8 to express he had a problem in the conversation process.

Excerpt 4.21. Partial Repeat

1	TN:	LI-1, what season are we going to have at the end of the week, I
2		need to look up it is 21 or 22. what season is it to turn into at the
3		end of the week
4→	LI-1:	season?

5 TN: what season is it at the end of the week?

6→ LI-1: season? spring?

7 TN: no. spring summer fall winter we have few more days turn into a

8 what season

Partial repeat was the third highest in frequency distribution for the first/second grade students. Excerpt 4.21 shows the partial repeat strategy, which the student LI-1 used in lines 4 and 6. While they were talking about the season LI-1 in line 4 seemed to have a problem with the teacher TN's question. He initiated repair with a repeat of the trouble source in lines 4 and 6.

First/second grade students used understanding check the most frequently because of their limited attention to the teacher's explanations or directions. The nonverbal strategy ranked the second in frequency distribution because of the newcomer. LC-2 used a nonverbal strategy for repair practice most of time during the class. Partial repeat was the third highest in frequency distribution.

Third/Fourth Grade Students and the Practices of Students' Repair Strategies

Third/fourth grade students met on Thursdays and Fridays with tutors from 2:00 pm to 2:40 pm. Both of them were newcomers from Korea and studied English for three years in their country. They were at similar levels of English proficiency in reading, writing, listening and speaking. They had an instruction class on Thursdays and a game-playing class on Fridays. Table 4.6 below is the frequency distribution of students' repair strategies in the third/fourth grade class.

Table 4.6.
Frequency Distribution of Third/Fourth Grade Students' Repair Strategies by Instruction and Game-playing Class

Repair Strategies	Instruction						Game-playing						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	**Total**
Unspecified	23	7	9	6	2	2	5	2	2	0	3	3	**64**
Interrogatives	3	2	5	6	2	6	2	1	1	2	3	0	**33**
(Partial) repeat	2	9	9	6	4	8	9	18	10	7	12	6	**100**
Partial repeat plus question word	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**4**
Understanding check	5	7	9	2	1	8	7	11	7	4	0	7	**68**
Request for repetition	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	**5**
Request for definition, translation or explanation	0	0	13	0	3	0	0	0	2	12	0	2	**32**
Correction	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	**5**
Nonverbal	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	**7**
Total	**34**	**27**	**52**	**21**	**15**	**24**	**25**	**34**	**23**	**26**	**19**	**20**	**319**

Note. Classes 1 to 6 are instruction class and 7 to 12 are game-playing class.

Third/fourth grade students had a total of 310 cases of repair strategies during twelve classes. The partial repeat was observed the most frequently (100 cases, 31%). Understanding check (68 cases, 21%) and unspecified (64 cases, 20%) were used the next highest in frequency. Interrogatives and request for definition, translation or explanation were observed in 33 cases (10%) and 32 cases (10%), respectively. Nonverbal, correction, request for repetition, and partial repeat plus question word were ranked least with 7 cases (2%), 5 cases (1%), 5 cases (1%), and 4 cases (1%), respectively.

Unlike the natural conversations outside the classroom, students used written language for pedagogical as well as communicative purposes. When the students

encountered unfamiliar vocabulary in these written materials, they were likely to ask questions immediately as in the Excerpt 4.22.

Excerpt 4.22. Partial Repeat

1→ LK-4: which means consider?
2 TK: consider? considered ok, so like seals are considered (1.0) that's
3 thought of
4→ LK-4: thought?
5 TK: we consider them we classify them, or we think of them, is that
6 make sense?
7 LK-4: ((nodding))

In Excerpt 4.22 they were reading a book about sea animals. In line 1 student LK-4 initiated repair for the written language in the book. In line 2 tutor TK explained the new vocabulary "consider" in the next turn. In line 4 LK-4 again initiated repair with a repeat of the trouble source "thought," which indicated he still didn't get the meaning of "consider". The tutor TK's explanation in lines 5 and 6 resolved the problem and LK-4 displayed his understanding by nodding his head.

Excerpt 4.23. Partial Repeat

1 LK-3: ((yarn))
2 TK: long week? busy day?

3 LK-3: no

4 TK: no? my week is busy

5 LK-3: no, not busy

6 TK: that's good

7 LK-3: but tomorrow test

8 TK: you have test tomorrow?

9 LK-3: math test

10 TK: you have to study, study all night?

11 LK-3: no

12 TK: no? hehe you've done studying?

13 LK-3: it's easy

14 TK: good, good for you

15 LK-3: I'm working Korea

16 TK: uhm?

17 LK-3: I'm working Korea

18 TK: oh really? You study Korean at home?

19 LK-3: no, school

20 TK: at school? You study Korean at school?

21 LK-3: ((nodding))

22 TK: who teach you Korean at school?

23→ LK-3: who?

24 TK: by yourself?

25 LK-3: no, no, Korean is hard this is easy

26 TK: oh you think studying at Korea is hard but studying here is easy.

27 I see, school is easier here than that was in Korea

28 LK-3: ((nodding))

Excerpt 4.23 showed the repeat strategy used in the context of miscommunication. They were talking about school and a test. In Excerpt 4.23, tutor TK's non-understanding seemed attributable to the student LK-3's overall proficiency in English. The student LK-3's utterance in line 15 has problematic points: (1) ungrammatical form; (2) no relationship with the topic in the previous turn. For these reasons LK-3's turn led to comprehension difficulty for tutor TK. Tutor TK requested further information which would lead to the process of mutual understanding. In line 23, by initiating repair with interrogative LK-3 made an effort to mend the communication breakdown. He found that the communication breakdown in line 18 and 20 was caused by his previous words and he repaired this in line 25.

The second highest frequency of repair strategy in third/fourth grade students was understanding check. Excerpt 4.24 showed the understanding check used in the tutoring.

Excerpt 4.24. Understanding Check

1 TK: What about um, what's your favorite thing to watch on tv

2→ LK-4: program?

3 TK: uh huh↑

4 LK-4: I like weather channel

They were talking about TV shows and in line 2 Student LK-4 initiated repair with his alternative understanding of tutor TK's question in line 1. TK's affirmative token "uh huh" confirmed LK-4's understanding check and the conversation resumed.

Unspecified ranked third in frequency of repair strategies. Third/fourth grade students used unspecified when they encountered unfamiliar speech patterns, or expressions of native speakers.

Excerpt 4.25. Unspecified

1 TA: how have you been

2→ LK-4: uh?

3 TA: how have you been, pretty good?

4 LK-4: ((nodding))

5 TA: did you enjoy the little bit cold weather we got?

6→ LK-4 what?

7 TA: cold weather you enjoyed it? A little bit of cold↑

8 LK-4: I like it because college station is hot

9 TA: it is hot

In Excerpt 4.25 tutor TA and student LK-4 were chatting while waiting for another student LK-3. In line 2 LK-4's repair practice did not specify the trouble source. In line 3 TA produced her trouble source turn again with an example of a response to the question. In line 4 LK-4 displayed his understanding and responded with a gesture. The same repair pattern was found in the following conversation. In line 6 LK-4 initiated repair with unspecified and the tutor repeated the trouble source turn by making fragments of the whole sentence.

Since the third/fourth grade students were the newcomers to the US they were not familiar with the speech patterns, expressions, or pronunciations of native speakers. Consequently they used partial repeat, understanding check, and unspecified the most frequently in their tutoring class.

Differences of Repair Practices between First/Second Graders and Third/Fourth Graders

So far repair practices of each grade level students have been discussed. In this part the differences of repair practice between first/second graders and third/fourth graders will be discussed in two aspects: 1) differences in using understanding check, and 2) differences in using request for definition, translation, or explanation.

Both first/second grade students and third/fourth grade students used understanding check frequently in their classes. In the first/second grade class understanding check was used the most frequently and in the third/fourth grade class it was the second highest occurrence. The trouble source that yielded understanding check was different according to the grade levels. First/second grade students have shorter

attention spans than third/fourth grade students, and as a result they tended to initiate repair on the teachers' directions. Excerpts 4.26, 4.27, and 4.28 have the form of understanding checks for repair practice.

Excerpt 4.26. Understanding Check

1	TN:	good morning? I need to sit over here. everybody sit on the floor.
2		who wants to sit on Texas?
3	LI-1:	I'm gonna sit on- (1.0) um. I am gonna sit on red one.
4	TN:	I need to sit on florida that is the one where the Disney world is
5→	LI-1:	((pointing to the Florida on the map printed on the rug)) this one?
6	TN:	yes

Excerpt 4.26 shows the trouble source of the repair was in the teacher's direction. In line 4 the teacher asked the students to sit down on the floor and assigned LI-1 a spot to sit on. At the next turn LI-1 initiated repair on the teacher's direction.

Excerpt 4.27. Understanding Check

1	TN:	I've been so proud of you today. we are gonna play another game.
2		we can't shake really loud cause Mrs. W's class having a test
3→	LI-1:	((pointing to the right side)) this class?
4	TN:	yes let's see

In Excerpt 4.27, the teacher asked the students not to make noise because students had a test in the next room. Student LI-1 had an understanding problem in the conversation of Excerpt 4.27. He was not sure which classroom was having the test. In line 3 LI-1 initiated the repair to the teacher's directions.

Excerpt 4.28. Understanding Check

1	TN:	let's see. you know what? maybe we should make our gingerbread
2		man tomorrow. Well, not tomorrow. I can put this in the
3		refrigerator cause we don't have time for bake today. you all
4		need, the fun part will be, um I'm gonna spread some flour on our
5		foil and we are gonna put this and with rolling pin roll it out and
6		we'll go like this, put it our like gingerbread man and then [icing
7	LC-1:	[ice
8	LI-1:	tomorrow? are we gonna do that tomorrow?
9	TN:	no. um LC-1 and you are not gonna here tomorrow um I think
10		we're gonna- ok, we'll wait until Wednesday. cook this I mean
11		make them and cook them ok?

Excerpt 4.28 shows that LC-1 initiated repair in line 8 on the teacher's directions while they were making gingerbread man cookies.

Excerpt 4.29. Understanding Check

1 LK-4: which means thick layer and blubber?

2 TK: ok thick layer is very thick something that, this would be thin and

3 this is thick

4 LK-3: I know

5 TK: blubber is like fat like we have some around our belly sometimes.

6 it keeps them warm really really really thick

7→ LK-4: not skinny?

8 TK: huh?

9 LK-4: not skinny?

10 TK: yup

On the contrary, third/fourth grade students used the understanding check strategy on the content of the instruction more frequently than on the directions. The conversation in the Excerpt 4.29 started with the student LK-4's question and TK explained what LK-4 asked in lines 2, 3, 5, and 6. The student LK-4 asked if his understanding was correct in line 7 and the tutor TK confirmed his repair initiation to be correct.

Excerpt 4.30. Understanding Check

1 TK: what are shellfish?

2 LK-4: shellfish is-

3 LK-3: ((imitating like squid or octopus))

4 TK: that's octopus

5 LK-3: not octopus

6 TK: not octopus?

7→ LK-4: shellfish is clam?

8 TK: clam? uh huh

9 LK-3: tropical fish

10 TK: like anything has shell

They were talking about shellfish in Excerpt 4.30. In line 7 the student LK-4 was not sure if the clam was a shellfish and initiated repair using the form of understanding check.

Another difference between the two grade level students' repair strategies can be found in the request for definition, translation, or explanation. Table 4.7 shows the comparison of the total number of occurrence and percentages of the strategies that occurred with low frequencies in the first/second grade and third/fourth grade classes. First/second grade students did not use the request for repetition and request for definition, translation, or explanation during twelve class hours, even though request for definition, translation, or explanation was used in third/fourth grade students' class (10%). In the third/fourth grade class the request for definition, translation, or explanation was used in written words found in the reading materials or instructions for language games.

Table 4.7.
Comparison of the Total Number of Occurrence and Percentages of the Strategies that Occurred with Low Frequencies in the First/Second and Third/Fourth Graders

Repair Strategies	First/Second Grade		Third/Fourth Grade	
	Raw Score	%	Raw Score	%
Partial repeat plus question word	13	4%	4	1%
Request for repetition	0	0%	5	1%
Request for definition, translation, or explanation	0	0%	32	10%

First/second grade students, except LC-2 who did not produce other types of repair strategies but nonverbal, were in their second semester at the school. That means they were familiar with the classroom routine as well as native speaker's speech patterns, expressions, or pronunciations and did not initiate repair explicitly with the request for repetition. In addition, they were in the stage of beginning literacy. They just started to spell and read the words they already knew. For this reason they did not produce the strategy of request for definition, translation, or explanation.

Meanwhile third/fourth grade students already developed literacy in reading and writing but had limited competence in speaking. Partial repeats with question words require a combination of cognitive, linguistic, and interactive skills (Egbert, 1998) and they rather chose to use relatively simple strategies such as unspecified and partial repeat.

Excerpts 4.31 and 4.32 were the third/fourth grade students' repair practices with request for repetition, which first/second graders didn't use in their class. They were studying past tense and having quizzes about the past tense verb form.

Excerpt 4.31. Request for Repetition

1	TK:	today I sneeze wobbly, yesterday I, what verb-
2→	LK-4:	uhm? one more time
3	TK:	today I sneeze wobbly
4	LK-3:	<sneezed>
5	TK:	yeah sneezed.

In Excerpt 4.31 a tutor TK read a sentence and asked students to change the verb form to the past tense. In line 2 LK-4 seemed not to hear the tutor's request and initiated repair with unspecified followed by request for repetition. At the next turn the tutor repeated the trouble source and LK-3 answered in line 4. By the tutor TK's affirmative token "yeah" it showed that the problem was resolved.

Excerpt 4.32. Request for Repetition

1	TK:	ok. today I saw with thread yesterday
2→	LK-4:	uhm? one more time
3	TK:	today I saw with thread yesterday I
4	LK-3:	[sawed
5	LK-4:	[sawed
6	TK:	sawed
7→	LK-3:	((pointing to the picture seeing)) like this?
8	TK:	no look at this picture ((pointing to the picture sawing))

9 LK-4: um. sawed

10 TK: did you find it? ok.

Excerpt 4.32 was from the same activity as Excerpt 4.31. LK-4 initiated repair with unspecified and request for repetition in line 2. As the tutor TK repeated his trouble source at the next turn LK-4 seemed to know the word "sawed" in line 5. However, in line 7 he initiated repair with understanding check and that means he was not sure of the word. With the tutor's explanation in line 8 LK-4's communication problem was resolved.

Excerpt 4.33 and 4.34 were the third/fourth grade students' repair practices with request for definition, translation, or explanation, which first/second graders didn't used in their class. They were playing the game 'Apples to Apples Junior'.

Excerpt 4.33. Request for Definition, Translation, or Explanation

1 TA: only a judge picks the green card

2 LK-3: ((sending out cards to each player)) here. here.

3 TA: do you wanna be a judge?

4 LK-3: yeah

5 LK-4: I go this

6 TA: no. put face down, the judge mix them up and he find the one he

7 thinks the funniest one

8→ LK-4: ((picking up a card and read) spooky. which means spooky?

9 LK-3: spooky scary

10 LK-4: aha

11 TA: and mix'em up and LK-3 picks the funniest one

12 LK-3: this

13 TA: which one do you think spookiest

In Excerpt 4.33 the tutor explained the game and told the students the judge was the one who had the green card and chose the funniest one among the red cards. In line 8 LK-4 encountered the unknown word "spooky" and initiated repair with request for definition, translation, or explanation. LK-3 responded to the trouble source at the next turn. And LK-4's acknowledge token "aha" in line 10 indicated that the problem was resolved.

Excerpt 4.34. Request for Definition, Translation, or Explanation

1→ LK-4: ((pick up a card and read)) mermaid. what is mermaid?

2 TA: mermaid? a woman has fish tail she doesn't have legs

3 LK-4: aha. I'm this

4 TA: ok ((giggle))

In Excerpt 4.34, it seemed that the student LK-4 had a problem with the word "mermaid". In line 1 request for definition, translation, or explanation was initiated from the written word he got on the card. At the next turn the tutor TK explained the meaning and the problem was resolved.

There were differences in using understanding check and request for definition, translation, or explanation between the two grade levels. First/second grade students tended to initiate repair with understanding check on the teacher's directions. Third/fourth grade students used the understanding check strategy on the content of the instruction more frequently than the directions. First/second grade students did not use the request for definition, translation, or explanation during twelve class hours observed even though request for definition, translation, or explanation was used in the third/fourth grade students' class. Third/fourth graders used the request for definition, translation, or explanation for written words, such as words in the reading materials or instructions of language games.

Research Question Four

What other characteristics are observed in elementary students' practices of repair in ESL classroom?

Besides the findings that are relevant to the two variables, class types and grade levels, some other interesting findings regarding the second language learners' practices of repair emerged from the analyses. Those were multiple repair strategies and difference of repair strategies found within the first/second grade students' instruction classes.

Some students used more than one strategy in the same turn. The analyses showed that students sometimes combined two strategies to specify their trouble source. They tended to begin with nonspecific repair initiation types, such as unspecified, partial

repeat, and interrogative, and move on to specific types like understanding check and request for repetition.

Excerpt 4.35. Multiple Strategies

1	TK:	yeah. so, what are the males called?
2→	LK-3:	uhm? (2.0) ah, their babies are called pups?
3	TK:	that's true.

Excerpt 4.35 was from the third/fourth grade instruction class. They were discussing the content of the book they just read. The tutor TK asked a question to the students and LK-3 initiated repair with two strategies, unspecified and understanding check in line 2.

Excerpt 4.36. Multiple Strategies

1	TK:	today I sneeze wobbly, yesterday I, what verb-
2→	LK-4:	uhm? One more time
3	TK:	Today I sneeze wobbly
4	LK-3:	sneezed
5	TK:	yeah sneezed.

Excerpt 4.37. Multiple Strategies

1	TK:	ok. today I saw with thread yesterday
2→	LK-4:	uhm? One more time
3	TK:	today I saw with thread yesterday I
4	LK-3:	[sawed
5	LK-4:	[sawed
6	TK:	sawed
7	LK-3:	((pointing to the picture seeing)) like this?
8	TK:	no look at this picture ((pointing to the picture sawing))
9	LK-4:	um. sawed
10	TK:	did you find it? Ok

Excerpts 4.36 and 4.37, which were reviewed in the previous section, also had two multiple strategies in the same turn. Both of them had unspecified and request for repetition in the same turn.

Excerpt 4.38. Multiple Strategies

1	TK:	those are ducks
2→	LK-3:	why? duck is fly?
3	TK:	yup. ducks can fly a little bit. they migrate. that means they go
4		warm place in winter

Excerpt 4.38 had interrogative and understanding check in line 2. While they were discussing the ducks in the book the student LK-3 initiated multiple repair strategies.

Excerpt 4.39. Multiple Strategies

1	TA:	planets
2→	LK-3:	planets? um (2.0) flower? rose?
3	TA:	find any?
4	LK-3:	yeah. flower
5	TA:	that's not planet. it's plant. planets like earth
6	LK-3:	earth
7	TA:	earth? ok, you can choose that one. alright

Excerpt 4.39 was from a third/fourth grade game-playing class. They were playing a word association game. The one who picked the card should think of a word on the card and put the marker on the first letter of the word on the board. In line 2, the student LK-3 confused the word planet and plant and he initiated repair with repeat at first and then he used understanding check in the same turn.

Excerpt 4.40. Multiple Strategies

1	TN:	LI-1, what season are we going to have at the end of the week, I
2		need to look up it is 21 or 22. what season is it to turn into at the
3		end of the week

4 LI-1: season?

5 TN: what season is it at the end of the week?

6→ LI-1: season? spring?

7 TN: no. spring summer fall winter we have few more days turn into a

8 what season

Excerpt 4.40 in the previous section also has multiple repair strategies. While they were talking about the season, LI-1 in line 4 seemed to have problem with the teacher's question. He initiated repair with repeat in the trouble source in line 4, and one more time in line 6 he initiated repair with repeat and understanding check in the same turn.

There is no basis to link these multiple repair strategies to the class types or grade levels. However, learning about these different types of students' repair strategies in the classroom helps the understanding of ESL students' language in the school setting.

Another interesting finding is the difference of repair strategies found within the first/second grade students' instruction classes. Table 4.8 shows the frequency distribution of first/second grade students' repair strategies in the instruction class. Table 4.9 shows frequency distribution of first/second grade students' repair strategies in the game-playing class.

Table 4.8.
Frequency Distribution of First/Second Grade Students' Repair Strategies in Instruction

Repair Strategies	Class												
	1	2	3	**4**	5	6	7	8	9	10	**11**	**12**	Total
Unspecified	0	1	0	**0**	3	0	0	3	0	0	**0**	**0**	7
Interrogatives	2	1	0	**0**	0	0	3	3	2	0	**1**	**0**	12
(partial) repeat	4	3	2	**1**	0	0	2	1	2	2	**2**	**4**	23
Partial repeat plus question word	0	0	2	**4**	0	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	**1**	9
Understanding check	6	6	5	**20**	5	0	12	7	2	6	**5**	**4**	**78**
Request for repetition	0	0	0	**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0**	0
Request for definition, translation or explanation	0	0	0	**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0**	0
Correction	9	1	2	**3**	4	0	2	1	2	2	**1**	**0**	27
Nonverbal	3	4	6	**7**	5	4	1	4	4	4	**0**	**1**	**43**
Total	24	16	17	**35**	17	4	20	20	12	14	**10**	**10**	199

Note. 6th class had only LC-2 in the class.

Table 4.9.
Frequency Distribution of First/Second Grade Students' Repair Strategies in Game-playing

Repair Strategies	Class												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Unspecified	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	3
Interrogatives	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
(Partial) repeat	2	0	0	3	5	0	2	3	1	2	1	3	**22**
Partial repeat plus question word	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	4
Understanding check	2	2	2	3	2	1	1	3	4	4	4	3	**31**
Request for repetition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Request for definition, translation or explanation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Correction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Nonverbal	1	3	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	9
Total	5	5	4	7	7	6	4	6	8	6	6	7	71

Careful examination of all the occurrences of each strategy in the instruction classes revealed that among the twelve sessions of observed class, the fourth class

showed the largest number of instances (35) and the 11th and 12th classes were the smallest number of instances (10). Meanwhile the occurrences of repair practices in the game-playing class had no significant difference.

Table 4.10 shows the specific kinds of activities during the fourth class, which had the largest number of repair practices, and the twelfth class, which had the smallest number of repair practices, in the instruction classes.

Table 4.10.
Activity Types in the Fourth and Twelfth Classes of the First/Second Grade Students

Fourth Class	Twelfth Class
1. Asking students the detail of the story "three bears" which was read at the last class 2. Act out the story with puppets 3. Make a picture book	1. Asking students the detail of the story "gingerbread man" which was read at the last class 2. Exploring the ingredients for making gingerbread man 3. Read the recipe and make the cookie dough

The fourth class had the leaner role-playing activity, which invited the students to act out a puppet show, and the twelfth class had a teacher-fronted activity, which gave the students directions and the students follow them. These two types of activities lead to the differences in students repair practices.

Excerpts 4.41 and 4.42 were from the fourth and twelfth class, respectively, and contrast the number of repair practices in two different activity types.

Excerpt 4.41. Fourth Instruction

1	TN:	now we are gonna quickly go over goldilocks and three bears
2		then, I am going to let you work on the story. I need your eyes
3		over here. I didn't see your eyes.
4→	LI-1:	((indistinct talk))
5	TN:	just a minute LI-1. I'm waiting on LC-2
6	LC-1:	TN
7	TN:	let's wait for LC-2 and ((to LC-1)) I'll let your turn. LC-2 would
8		you like to sit like this↑, I see you well right here, we are gonna
9		have our story today. good job, ok.LI-1 your turn.
10→	LI-1:	eh (1.0) eh (1.0) are we gonna have- are we gonna this, did you
11		say are we gonna make a book?
12	TN:	we are gonna make a book, guess what? this book has no words, it
13		only has pictures, you gonna draw.
14→	LI-1:	like this?
15	TN:	yeah, you are gonna tell the story with your mouth
16→	LI-1:	I saw the markers, is it for that?
17	TN:	we got plenty of things to do the [story
18	LI-1:	[the story
19	TN:	just a minute, the story's gonna talk about pictures, about words,
20		you are gonna talk about the story

Excerpt 4.41 from the fourth class showed a series of repair practices while the teacher talked about the things to do for that day. In line 4 LI-1 tried to initiate repair with indistinct talk, which was blocked by the teacher at the next turn for giving additional directions to the other student. In line 10 LI-1 tried to initiate one more time with understanding check. The fact that LI-1 continued to ask “like this?” in line 14 and one more repair initiation in line 16 indicated that the communication problem was caused by understanding rather than non-hearing.

Excerpt 4.42. Twelfth Instruction

1	TN:	who am I going to ask the next job, let’s see, next we need one
2		cup of sugar, let me see LC-1. you are standing with your hands
3		back. these are all different sizes, cups measuring cups. this is the
4		one cup. it’s the largest one, isn’t it? would you pour one cup of
5		sugar? LC-2 I need your hands behind your back, thank you. now
6		I’m gonna hold the cup for you. pour the sugar in it ok? right here
7→	LC-1:	with the spoon?
8	TN:	no just pour in right here. pour in the cup. this is one cup of sugar.
9		keep pouring pour pour pour pour keep on keep on the- all the
10		way. alright go go go go fast. this is gonna be one cup. you can
11		use all of them, LC-1. (1.0) yeah↑ good job. there’s one cup.
12		straighten up and pour it
13	LI-1:	do it LC-1, pour

Excerpt 4.42 was from the twelfth class, which had the smallest number of occurrence of repair practices. Students were making cookies and most of the time teacher gave specific directions to each student and the students followed the directions. In line 1 to 6 the teacher explained how to measure one cup of sugar and she let LC-1 measure it. In line 7 LC-1 initiated repair for additional directions on how to pour the sugar into the measuring cup and got the confirmation from the teacher at the next turn.

Excerpts 4.43 and 4.44 contrasted the repair practices in the two different classes.

Excerpt 4.43. Fourth Instruction

1	TN:	it was crashed and broke and then she decided to go up the
2		(1.0)
3	LI-1:	hills
4	TN:	up the stairs
5→	LI-1:	stairs?
6	TN:	to get at the bed. she look at the papa bears bed and she said it's
7		too ((gesture to show big))
8		(2.0)
9→	LC-1:	hu- hu- um
10→	LI-1:	[big
11	TN:	[bi::g and she looked the mama bear's bed and said it's still too
12		((gesture to show big))

Excerpt 4.43 was from the fourth class meeting and shows several repair strategies, such as repeat, nonverbal, and correction. While talking about the story the “three bears” LI-1 initiated repair with repeat in line 5 and the teacher TN resolved the problem by giving additional information. In line 9 when LC-1 did not respond to the teacher’s words LI-1 gave correction to continue the conversation.

Excerpt 4.44. Twelfth Instruction

1	TN:	what we gonna do [is
2	LC-1:	[make a gingerbread man
3	TN:	alright, we are gonna do just what the little woman did.
4		remember↑ she was sitting down and making gingerbread man,
5		and we have oven in the cafeteria, and we are going to make
6		gingerbread man.and see if the gingerbread man we mad run away
7→	LI-1:	in the cafeteria?
8	TN:	um, yes. they have oven just like this. but this is, what the little
9		woman’s gingerbread man looks like. see how he looks. we will
10		have different ways, we are able to choose, to make your own
11		gingerbread man

Excerpt 4.44 from the twelfth class showed a single repair practice as the students follow the teacher’s directions. In line 7 LI-1displays that he had a problem with the teacher’s

directions by initiating repair with the repeat strategy. The problem was solved with the teacher's confirmation at the next turn.

The more structured class where the students need to follow the teacher's directions with time constraints produced less repair strategies from the students. On the contrary, the less structured class that invited students to the verbal activities produced more repair strategies.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMANDATIONS

This chapter begins with the purpose and research design for this inquiry. Then, the discussion of the findings with respect to those previous studies will follow. The chapter concludes with conclusions, implications, limitations, and recommendations.

Purpose and Design

Purpose of the Study

A review of the related literature indicated that repair plays a primary role in the acquisition of a second language (Long, 1983; Swain, 1985; Gass, 1997). In the repair process learners get chances to receive comprehended input and produce comprehensible output (Pica, Halliday, Lewis & Morgenthaler, 1989). Many studies have examined conversation in various language-learning classrooms, and found that there are classroom-specific characteristics in the repair process. Little research has been done on the elementary level student talking that involves the description of how students use different types of repair strategies in different conversation breakdowns in the second language classroom. Therefore, the present study was designed to investigate elementary level students' repair strategies.

The primary purpose of this study was to explore conversational repair strategies employed by elementary level ESL students in their classroom. In other words, this study was an attempt to provide greater understanding of elementary ESL students'

repair strategies involving communication problems within the classroom. This study investigated repair strategies that are employed by elementary ESL students and determined if there were differences in the usage of repair strategies by class types and grade levels.

Sample Plan

The classes in which this research was conducted were chosen based on the two potential factors influencing ESL students' practices, which were class context and the grade of the students. In order to compare the students' repair practices in classes with different contexts, two different participation frameworks were selected for the investigation: (1) an instruction centered class; and (2) a language related game-playing class. In order to investigate the variable of age, first and second grade students' ESL class and third and fourth grade students' tutoring class were chosen. The data came from twenty four class hours of videotaped interactions of regular ESL class and tutoring class. The regular class had first and second graders together, and tutoring class third and fourth graders together.

Research Questions

The following questions were examined in this study:

1. What are the types and frequency distributions of students' repair strategies that elementary ESL students employ in the classroom?
2. How do these types of repair strategies differ according to the class types?
3. How do these types of repair strategies differ according to the grade levels of the students?

4. What other characteristics are observed in elementary students' practices of repair in ESL classroom?

Discussions of Findings

The class observation at an elementary school ESL classroom provided the overall findings for the four research questions elaborated below. The four research questions examined the elementary ESL students' repair strategies to deal with communication breakdown in their ESL classroom from the perspective of a conversation analysis. This study analyzed repair types and their frequencies employed by students in the classroom according to class types and grade levels.

Research Question One

What are the types and frequency distributions of students' repair strategies that elementary ESL students employ in the classroom?

Question one analyzed the types and frequency distributions of students' repair strategies in the ESL classroom. Previous studies categorized repair strategies as unspecified, interrogatives, (partial) repeat, partial repeat plus question word, understanding check (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977), requests for repetition (Egbert, 1998), and request for definition, translation, or explanation (Liebscher & Dailey-O'cain, 2003). Those categories are from the data of adult conversations in various settings from natural conversation to conversation in a language learning classroom. After analyzing the data from the elementary ESL classroom, it became

necessary to add new categories to the combined categories derived from the previous studies. Those were correction and nonverbal resources.

In natural conversation participants have a tendency not to use explicit correction; instead they use it by disguising as something else, such as a list of alternatives (Lerner, 1994). However, in a language classroom explicit correction was observed commonly as teacher's feedback (Panova & Lyster, 2002; Lyster, & Ranta, 1997). The young language learners in this study tended to use this strategy explicitly in their classroom conversation. This type is related to not only linguistic errors, but also comprehension of the trouble source turn. It includes pronunciation, grammar, syntax, morphology, vocabulary meaning, usage of words, and content.

Another strategy observed in this study is nonverbal resources. Non-linguistic or nonverbal aspects such as students' gestures, bodily movement, eye gaze, facial expressions, hesitation pauses, and silence are involved in the coding system. In conversations, the speakers use place-holders such as *uh*, *uhm*, or *well*, in pauses or silence which are intended not to lose their turn (Rieger, 2003). These kinds of place-holders are included in this category. The functions of this nonverbal strategy in classroom interactions between teachers and the students were noticed.

Thus, the types of students' repair strategies for this study are the following: unspecified, interrogatives, (partial) repeat, partial repeat plus question word, understanding check (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977), requests for repetition (Egbert, 1998), request for definition, translation or explanation (Liebscher & Dailey-O'cain, 2003), correction (Panova & Lyster, 2002; Lyster, & Ranta, 1997), and

nonverbal strategies (Goodwin, 2000; Streeck, 1996). New typology is more inclusive and possibly provides more specific resources of students' repair practices in the ESL classroom.

Preference for certain types of repair strategies is similar to those of adults. Elementary ESL students have a tendency to use understanding check and partial repeat to repair their communication breakdown. These findings are consistent with similar studies (Egbert, 1998; Libscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2003). Understanding check is the most specific repair initiation type found in everyday conversation and partial repeat is also highly specific with respect to the kind of trouble they target (Schegloff, 1987). The tendency of using specific repair initiations can be applied to elementary ESL students as well as adult language learners.

Research Question Two

How do these types of repair strategies differ according to the class types?

The second question was how the class types relate to students' repair strategies. This variable was examined by comparing the students' types and distribution of repair strategies in two types of classes, an instruction class and a game-playing class. The instruction class is characterized by fixed roles, teacher-oriented tasks, and focus on knowledge content, while the game-playing class is characterized by negotiated roles and focus on the process and fluency (Kramsch, 1985). First/second grade students who had instruction and game-playing in one class hour and third/fourth grade students who had the two types of classes on separate days were examined respectively. Similarities as

well as differences were observed in the types and frequencies of the students' repair strategies in the two types of classes.

First/second Grade Students. In instruction classes of first/second grade students understanding check and nonverbal strategies were high in frequency. In game-playing classes first/second grade students used understanding check and partial repeat the most frequently. First/second grade students showed similarity in using certain types of repair strategies. Understanding check was the most frequently used repair strategy in both types of classes. Additionally, students in both classes did not use the strategy request for repetition nor did they use the strategy request for definition, translation, or explanation.

The difference that significant was the total number of repair strategies produced in both types of classes. The total number of repair strategies in the instruction class was more than double of the total number of repair strategies in game-playing class. For example, instruction class had 199 cases of repair practices while game-playing class had 71 cases of repair practices. This finding of the difference of students' use of repair practices in two types of classes support Kasper (1985) and Kinginger (1995)'s research. Kasper (1985) found that participants avoid interrupting the speaker when they focused on the flow of meaning. In a similar vein, Kinginger (1995) conducted a study with American university students studying French as a foreign language and revealed that instructional activities produced greater amounts of conversational repair than natural tasks did.

During the instruction class when new content knowledge was studied with activities many repair strategies were employed. During the game-playing class when a language-related game was played fewer repair sequences occurred. Unlike the instruction class, students focused on the process of playing games, and as a result the game-playing class had less repair practices.

Third/fourth Grade Students. Repair strategies of third/fourth grade students in instruction class were greater than those in game-playing class. For example, instruction class had 172 cases of repair practices while game-playing class had 135 cases of repair practices. However, the total number of repair strategies did not indicate a significantly meaningful difference. The data showed that most of the time third/fourth grade students used simple strategies such as unspecified, partial repeat, and understanding check to express their conversational problem. On the contrary, the linguistically more challenging category of partial repeat with question words was seldom used. These findings replicate similar results of a previous study in which American college students learning German used more simple strategies than challenging strategies at the beginning level (Egbert, 1998). Third/fourth grade students were newcomers to the environments of the American school and they encountered communication difficulties due to unfamiliarity with the speech or pronunciations of native speakers even though they learned English in their country. For these reasons they had not developed sophisticated methods for dealing with these difficulties and had a lack of flexibility to try a different repair strategy (Brinton, Fujiki, Loeb & Winkler, 1986). As a result third/fourth grade

students often employed unspecified repair strategies at the first class hour and used simple strategies such as partial repeat, and understanding check in both types of classes.

Research Question Three

How do these types of repair strategies differ according to the grade levels of the students?

The third research question asked how grade levels of students related to the use of the students' repair strategies. This variable was examined by analyzing the types and frequency distribution of the strategies in the first/second grade ESL class and those in the third/fourth grade ESL tutoring class.

For first/second grade students, understanding check was the most frequently used repair practice in the classroom setting. First/second grade students used understanding check the most frequently because of their limited attention span during the forty-minute class hour. Attention is the ability to maintain focus on a particular task. Because of restricted cognitive capacity, one cannot process many things at the same time (Glover, Ronning, & Bruning, 1990). Much more attention is needed for second language learners to produce in their second language than their native language. Consequently, second language learners pay attention to only some parts of the information. For these reasons, understanding check was employed the most in young children's language classroom.

Nonverbal was the second highest strategy in frequency distribution in the first/second graders. Most of the nonverbal strategies were used by LC-2 because he barely communicated with the teacher or other students in English.

For the third/fourth grade students, partial repeat was the most frequently used repair practice in the tutoring class. Understanding check and unspecified were the next highest in frequency distribution. Unlike the natural conversations outside the classroom, students used written language for pedagogical as well as communicative purposes. When the students encountered unfamiliar vocabulary items in these written materials, they were likely to ask questions immediately with the partial repeat strategy.

The differences of repair practices between first/second graders and third/fourth graders were found in the context when understanding check was used. Both first/second grade students and third/fourth grade students used understanding check frequently in their class. In the first/second grade class understanding check was used the most frequently and in the third/fourth grade class it was the second highest in frequency. The context in which understanding check was used was different according to the grade levels. In general, first/second grade students have shorter attention spans than third/fourth grade students due to their cognitive development (Bjorklund, 1997). As a result they tended to initiate repair on the teacher's directions. Third/fourth grade students used the understanding check strategy on the content of the instruction more frequently than on the directions.

Another difference between the two grade level students' repair strategies can be found in the two strategies request for repetition and request for definition, translation, or explanation. These two strategies were not used at all in the first/second grade students' classes. However, those two strategies were observed in the third/fourth grade students' tutoring classes. In the third/fourth grade class request for repetition showed

infrequently. The request for definition, translation, or explanation was used quite a lot in written words that were found in the reading materials or instructions of language games. The difference of the use of request for repetition can be explained with the familiarity with the native speaker. First/second grade students except LC-2, who did not produce other types of repair strategies but nonverbal, were in their second semester at the school. That means first/second grade students were familiar with the classroom routine as well as the native speaker's speech patterns, expressions, or pronunciations, and they did not initiate repair explicitly with the request for repetition. In addition, first/second grade students were in the stage of beginning literacy. They just started to learn how to spell and read the words they already knew. For this reason first/second grade students did not produce the strategy of request for definition, translation, or explanation to written words. On the contrary, the third/fourth grade students already developed literacy in reading and writing but had limited competence in speaking. That led to the result of frequent use of request for definition, translation, or explanation of written words.

Research Question Four

What other characteristics are observed in elementary students' practices of repair in ESL classroom?

The fourth question was proposed in order to include any particular characteristics that might come up regardless of the two primary variables that the present study is mainly examining. This study reported two kinds: multiple strategies

and difference of repair strategies found within the first/second grade students' instruction classes.

Some elementary ESL students used more than one strategy in the same turn. The analyses showed that students sometimes combined two strategies to specify their trouble source. They tended to begin with nonspecific repair initiation types such as unspecified, partial repeat, and interrogative, and move on to the specific types like understanding check and request for repetition.

Another interesting finding is the difference of repair strategies found within the first/second grade students' instruction classes. During the class hours with higher frequencies of repairs, the students and the teacher were working on tasks that yielded more frequent repair occurrences, such as preparing a puppet show with a story and making a book with no words in it. During the low frequency hours, the students and the teacher were engaged in tasks that produced relatively fewer or much fewer cases of repair, such as reviewing the ingredients and recipe for making a gingerbread man and following the directions to make the cookie dough. Leaning about these different practices of repair and their functions increases our understanding of the discourse structure of the second language classroom.

Conclusions

The present study explored elementary ESL students' repair strategies according to class types and grade levels. Some conclusions can be derived from the findings of the study.

1. In this study the elementary ESL students used nine types of repair strategies. They were: 1) unspecified, 2) interrogatives, 3) (partial) repeat, 4) partial repeat plus question word, 5) understanding check, 6) requests for repetition, 7) request for definition, translation or explanation, 8) correction, and 9) nonverbal strategies. The elementary ESL students used understanding check and partial repeat more frequently.
2. The findings indicated that both class types and grade levels influenced the types and distribution of the students' repair strategies.
3. Instruction class produced more amounts of conversational repair than game-playing class. However, in both types of classes, first/second grade students employed understanding check the most frequently, and third/fourth grade students partial repeat the most.
4. In the first/second grade students' repair practices, understanding check was observed in the teacher's direction. In the third/fourth grade students' repair practices, however, understanding check was observed in the content of instruction. Request for repetition and request definition, translation, or explanation were not observed in the first/second grade students' class but used in the third/fourth grade students' class.
5. Students' decisions on the types and frequency of their repair strategies were influenced by their familiarity with the native speakers.

Implications

Implications of the current study are presented in four respects. First, this study described the conversations in the ESL classroom, why the communication breakdowns occur and how they were solved. In addition, the study emphasized the process of understanding the repair practices of ESL students in solving the communication breakdown. Many times teachers do not response appropriately to repair strategies that are initiated by students. This can confuse students, if teachers are unaware of student's usage of repair strategies. By describing the process of students' repair practices, this study raises the need for elementary ESL teachers and researchers to be aware of types of conversational problems that occurred in the classroom and how to assist students in trying to use the appropriate repair strategies.

Another implication of this study is the need to examine ESL materials and lessons. Understanding how elementary ESL students treat communication breakdown will provide educators such as teachers and researchers with more insight about how to develop ESL materials and lessons to assist students in the development of their repair strategies. This study found that elementary ESL students who were newcomers to the American school have a tendency to use simple strategies such as unspecified and partial repeat in their classroom. Thus, ESL educators need to develop materials and design lessons that guide the students toward more sophisticated repair methods to deal with communication breakdowns.

The third implication addresses graduate and undergraduate ESL or EFL (English as a foreign language) programs. While many teacher education programs offer

ESL endorsement, many do not have in-depth study of pragmatics or conversation analysis where knowledge about communication breakdown and repair practices are addressed in greater details (Kasper, 2006). This study provides elementary language teachers with a resource describing the types of repair practices which students used in the classroom. Teachers will be able to respond to the communication problems of students more effectively when they understand the students' ways of resolving the conversation problems. Thus, graduate and undergraduate ESL or EFL programs need to include the curriculum on pragmatics or conversation analysis in order to study communication breakdown and the repair practices of the students.

Fourthly, this study adopted conversation analysis as analytic framework that is different from those previous used in second language acquisition studies. Instead of analyzing linguistic products of students, this study focused on the processes toward mutual understanding between students and teachers. With a micro-analytic approach this study provided insight on the ESL students' repair patterns, functions, and strategies. Such research approach could assist in helping teachers work more effectively with the increasing population of ESL students in school in America or other countries that are experiencing population growths of ESL or EFL students.

Recommendations

More research will also be needed to generalize the findings of this study.

1. The data in this study were gathered in particular classes, a first/second grade ESL class and a third/fourth grade ESL tutor class, in an elementary

school. The small number of participants and the particularity of the research site may limit any attempt to generalize the results of the present study. Future investigations in a range of different settings such as different schools and grades will broaden our understanding of students' repair practices in the context of the L2 classroom.

2. While this study was conducted with the variables of class types and grade levels, future research should include an investigation of how other potential variables function in relation to the types and frequency distribution of students' repair strategies. These variables might include length of stay in US, literacy levels, and oral fluency of the students.

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APPENDIX A

TEACHER INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHER

An Examination of the Use of Repair Strategies of Elementary ESL Students By Class Type and Age

You have been asked to participate in a research project on the elementary ESL learners' repair strategies. You were selected to be a possible participant because you teach ESL students at an elementary school. The purpose of this study is to explore conversational repair strategies employed by elementary level ESL students in their classroom. This study is part of the doctoral dissertation requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy degree and will be supervised by dissertation chair, Dr. Patricia Larke, in the Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture at Texas A&M University.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to be video taped in your class during the Fall semester, 2007. Each week two classes of two different grades will be observed with video camera. All names and information will be kept confidential. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Video taped records will be stored securely and only Eun Hye Cho and her advisor, Dr. Patircia Larke will have access to the information from the study. The data from this study will be kept to be used in the study and in future studies. Your participation in this project is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time for any reason.

This research study had been reviewed and approved by Institutional Review Board – Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, you can contact the Institutional Review Board through Ms. Melissa McIlhaney, IRB program coordinator, Office of Research Compliance, (979) 458-4067, mcilhaney@tamu.edu.

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact:

Eun Hye Cho
(979) 862-9016
Department of TLAC
Texas A&M University 4232
College Station, TX 77843-4232
echoes@tamu.edu

Dr. Patricia Larke
(979) 845-8382
Department of TLAC, College of Education
Texas A&M University 4232
College Station, TX 77843-4232
plarke@tamu.edu

Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and receive answers to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records. By signing this document, you consent to participate in the research and to be videotaped during the research.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM

PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM

Dear Parents,

I am presently a doctoral student at Texas A&M University. I am conducting a study on the conversation of ESL (English as a Second Language) students in their classroom. This study is part of the doctoral dissertation requirement for my Doctor of Philosophy degree and will be supervised by dissertation chair, Dr. Patricia Larke, in the Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture at Texas A&M University.

While working as an Aggie Buddy (volunteer) for ESL students at College Hills and studying as a doctoral student specializing ESL, I found that very little research on elementary ESL students' conversation that describes how students deal with their conversation breakdowns in the second language classroom. The present study is designed to investigate conversation of elementary ESL students in the second language classroom. Your child's participation will help us to understand the classroom conversation of ESL students. Your child's participation will provide us with more information on how to design more effective ESL lessons.

As part of this study, I will ask your child to do two things: be interviewed briefly and be observed in ESL class. The observation will be done with the classes which obtained permission from all the parents with digital video camera twice a week during the Fall semester, 2007. If your child participates in this study, there will be no interference in classroom routines or risks. All names, information, and video tapes will be kept confidential**.** The data from this study will be kept to be used in the study and in future studies. My advisor and I are the only ones who will have access to the information from the study. Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw your child at any time.

Please feel free to contact me (979) 862-9016 or Dr. Larke (979) 845-8382 if you have any questions. If you have any questions regarding your child's rights as a research participant, please call Ms. Melissa McIlhaney, Texas A&M Institutional Review Board program coordinator at (979) 458-4067.

Sincerely,

Eun Hye Cho,
Doctoral Student

Please sign and return this permission form to your child's teacher as soon as possible. Keep the front page for your records.

_____ I have read the above information and give permission for my child to participate in the study and to be video taped during the study.

_____ I have read the above information and do not give permission for my child to participate in the study and to be video taped during the study.

Child's name _____

Parent's signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX C

INFORMED ASSENT FORM FOR STUDENT

INFORMED ASSENT FORM FOR STUDENT
An Examination of the Use of Repair Strategies of Elementary ESL Students By Class Type and Age

You have been asked to join in a study on elementary ESL students' talk. The purpose of this study is to learn how ESL students and teachers talk to each other.

If you decide to be in this study, you will be asked to do two things: 1) be interviewed briefly 2) be videotaped along with the other students in your class twice a week for the Fall semester, 2007. You don't have to do anything different or special for this study. All you have to do is just participate in class as you normally do.

Other people will not know if you are in this study. The videotapes and all information from you will be kept private. Your name will not be used in any report.

You can be in the study now and change your mind later. You can stop at any time. You can call Eun Hye at 862-9016 if you have questions about the study or if you decide you don't want to be in the study any more.

Please be sure you have read the above information and got answers to all your questions. You will be given a copy of this assent form for your records. By signing this document, you agree to join in this study and to be videotaped during the study.

_____
Student's name

_____ _____
Student's signature Date

VITA

Name:	Eun Hye Cho
Address:	Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture, College of Education & Human Development, Texas A&M University MS 4232 College Station, TX 77843-4232
Email Address:	echoes@tamu.edu

Education:	B.A., English Language & Literature, Sookmyung Women's University at Seoul, Korea, 1993 M.A., English Linguistics, Sookmyung Women's University at Seoul, Korea, 1999
Presentations:	2004, January. "Three Case Studies of Korean Graduate Students in Web-based Courses" 9th Annual Educational Research Exchange Conference. 2003, March. "Strategies for Enhancing Diversity in Universities and Workplace" (Co-Authored with K. Clark-Jackson). Texas NAME Conference.
Awards:	2004, Fellowship, Teaching Learning and Culture, Texas A&M University