Repair Strategies in Formal Conversations by Indonesian Efl Students

Diyah Murti Hastuti,*Agus Wijayanto, Malikatul Laila

English Department, UniversitasMuhammadiyah Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia
*Corresponding author. Email: diyahums15@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The ability to conduct smooth conversation is the basis of human communication throughout centuries. In the globalization era in which intercultural communication is frequently performed, the ability to conduct conversations with others directly or indirectly through modern means of communication is highly demanded. In L2 learning, this has induced linguists and language educators to develop methods for enhancing L2 learners' ability to communicate in L2. This study investigated the ways in which English students conduct English conversations at English course in Surakarta. It particularly examined the ways in which they use of repair strategies. The participants of this study were Elementary level students at English Course. The data of the study was obtained through observing and recording the conversations among teacher and students in ELT activities. The results of this research revealed that other *initiate-other* repair was frequently used by the teachers to encourage the students' confidence in speaking. The students commonly used two types of repair, namely requesting for definition and correcting.

Keywords:*Conversation Analysis, Repair Strategy, Self-Confidence*

1. INTRODUCTION

As an International language, English has a huge role for people in the world. Since the 20th Century, English has become the official language in a large number of countries. English is now the dominant language in many sectors such as commerce, education, politics, social and many others. English Language is considered as the Foreign Language that must be taught in Indonesia since 1946. Currently, English has been taught from Elementary, Secondary, High school and also University level. It is driven by the increasingly recognition of high economic value for graduates who are skilled at communicating in English.

This trend is indirectly related to the demands of the global economic system and business opportunities with internet technology as the platform that place a very high level of English proficiency. As the result, the countries having qualified human resources with high English Language proficiency tend to have the high export revenue, such as Hongkong, and Singapore; South Korea and China. In Indonesia, the same trend also occurs. Almost all National or foreign companies in all business sectors prioritize the well-English proficiency staff. By theemerge of e-commerce and global market system of IT-based, where the customers

are from around the world, it needs the economic agents who qualified to communicate in International language. By this case, it implies that schools or English course (informal education) is required to enhance L2 learning in Indonesia [1].

As we know that globalization gives the extremely huge impact to the world. The changing system has been felt so much in this era, such as the global market which currently happens in around the world. Since the enactment of MEA (Masyarakat Ekonomi Asean) at the end of 2015, competition among countries especially ASEAN countries will be more dynamic and competitive, not only for economic sectors but also for various sectors such as business, education and entertainment. Therefore, to face this situation it is needed the competitive and qualified human resource especially at communicating.

In the light of communication, Indonesia is one of participants in agreement of MEA (Masyarakat Ekonomi Asean) which uses English as the language for global market in ASEAN. Therefore, communication competence is the essential component to survive in this era. Speaking is the most important skill of all the four language skills[2]. Because, it can measure how well someone masters the foreign language. The persons who

are able to speak English will be easier to gain the ultimate position in all the sectors. For example; in industry sectors, the companies will consider the prospective employee as the staff, than the ones who cannot speak English. In entertainment sector, the actors or singers who speak English proficiently will get the wider chance to go international and have a bright career in abroad.

The importance of English proficiency is not only impacted on working area but also in all aspects of life. Dealing with technology, it is clear that currently almost all modern technology using English such as computer, gadget, smartphones, etc. Since English is universal language, it also has a prominent role for academic area, at University level, some subjects have obligated the students to use the literature in English language. It becomes important since students not only translating the words but also understanding the meaning. Besides that, there are found many schools with bilingual system for preparing students to be ready and well prepared generation to be met with the future demand like communication and technology.

Speaking is not something easy to do. One of the big obstacles of speaking ability of Indonesian EFL learners is the self-confidence. Many students are shy when teachers ask them to speak in English during the English class. A study found that self-confidence is the main factor that hinders English learners' speaking ability[3]. The study also reported the English learners are afraid of making mistakes either in grammar or pronunciation. Another study shows that internal factors including (confusion, worry, embarrassment, shyness and non confidence) and misunderstanding are the main factors influence Indonesian EFL learners' poor speaking ability[4].

The same case related to the restrictions of students to speak English during EFL process also happens in other countries such as Malaysia, Arab, Laos and Palestine. A study in Malaysia shows that most of Malaysian primary school pupils are the victims of the common physiological factors such as fear in the class, shyness and anxiety[5]. They do not have confident to speak because they feel fear to speak in English. While some other are feeling shy and anxious when speaking in the class.

Meanwhile, the study in Lao revealed that the low speaking of the Lao students are caused by some factors namely external and internal factors[6]. The external factors include the local teachers' capability in teaching English is less. Secondly, the inappropriate curriculum to help students improving their English proficiency, and the last the class environment is crowded. Whereas for internal factors include the lack of students' understanding on English Language. Secondly, the psychological factors such as afraid of mistakes and shy

feeling impacts on the students' confident to use English. Thirdly is the lack of motivation for young learners to learn English. In addition, the factors of fear of mistake, shyness, anxiety and lack of confidence are some difficulties faced by students in Gaza when they learn to speak English[7].

Moreover, a study in Oman shows that the linguistic components such as vocabulary items and sentences understanding skills are the main speaking difficulties encountered by The Elementary students in Oman. Whilst, the psychology factor such as shyness and anxiety also effected on the learners' speaking ability. The students feel shy to speak English in front of their classmates because they are fear to make mistakes. They think that mistaken is very embarrassing[8].

Based on the studies mentioned above showing that the internal factor namely the Learners' psychology is the most frequent factor that effect on learners' speaking ability. However, a study has reported that both teachers and EFL learners in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia encountered challenges in EFL activities. The teachers face challenges of pedagogic challenges, such as the qualification, training as an EFL teacher, experience as a bilingual teacher(in Arabic context), perception of Arab culture, psychology of the learners, language policy, status of English, methods and strategies, assessment etc. Meanwhile, the learners face challenges mainly due to the grammar, technique of teaching, and lack of proper motivation and attitude etc.[9].

Many strategies have been conducted to improve speaking skill either in Indonesia and other countries. For example, a study showed that role-play, creative tasks, and drilling yielded good results to improve learners' speaking ability [10]. Another study showed that oral conversation, interview, dialogue, and presentation to improve Young learners' confidence in speaking [11].

In addition, the use of video clips with small group and individual activities yielded to improve young learners' speaking skill. The application of video clips and teaching-learning Small Group Activities is more effective to enhance the students' speaking than teaching with Individual Activities. All the strategies are good enough to improve the young learners' speaking ability, but it has not adequate yet because there is no specific guidance from the teacher while students practice speaking [12]. Thus, in this research the writer concerns on how the teacher's capability in understanding English to students during the conversation by repair strategy.

The studies that have been conducted by some researchers showing that technology has an important role in improving learners' speaking skills. A study in China showed that the use of mobile social networking improves learners' speaking skill between pre-test and

post-test [13]. Beside that, the learners gain the significantly progress in English fluency, accuracy and pronunciation.

Furthermore, another study showed that the use of podcast shows good results toward students' speaking skill [14]. The students' speaking skills performance improves significantly after undertaking treatments. So that, the implication of podcast media is considered as one of effective methods in teaching English especially speaking skill in EFL classes. In addition, the use of communicative games shows a positive impact on teaching learning process. The students' speaking ability experiences improvement toward their active participation, confidence and their fluency in speaking skill [15].

All the strategies are good enough to improve the young learners' speaking ability, but it has not adequate yet to know the learners' English speaking ability. Therefore, it needs to identify the English teaching strategies used by students to improve their English speaking ability.

One of the important things in conversation is repair strategies. The process of repair occurs when there is a difficulty or problem in the process of speaking, hearing or understanding the context-meaning in conversation. The types of problems that may arise in conversations includes misarticulating, malapropisms, use of a 'wrong' word, unavailability of a word when needed, failure to hear or to be heard among others [16]. In other words, it can be said that repair is "used to ensure that the interaction does not freeze in its place when trouble arises, that inter subjectivity is maintained or restored, and the turn and sequence and activity can progress to possible completion".

Repair strategies have been the rich field of study of Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis. There have been recently scarce studies on repair in L2 learning. For example, a study showed that the use of repair strategies by primary elementary students is very helpful to resolve conversational problems in speaking, hearing and understanding [17]. The young learners used 9 types of repair strategies in conversation. Understanding check strategy was mostly used by students to resolve their problems in speaking. Meanwhile, a study in Jordan found that Jordanian EFL learners used repair strategies (oral discourse) more frequently to improve learners' speaking skill [18]. Another study in Indonesia showed that repair strategies of teacher's talk is used to improve students' speaking skill in Indonesian EFL classroom [19]. The study reported that teachers used many repairs to enable students in classroom activities and the repairs were also used to re-explain the teaching materials as many students did not concentrate on the learning activities. In addition, self-initiation/self-repair and other initiation/

self-repair were used by students in China during conversation class to bring as far as possible initiative of students into full play[20].

Repair strategies were also used by Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners. The study showed that other-initiated self-completed was a preferred strategy for error treatment in both male and female classrooms [21]. In addition, another study revealed that other-initiated repair strategies were used to solve understanding problem in EFL learners' conversation. The result of study showed that there were eight types of other-initiated repair strategies used by theEFL learners to solve the problems. In addition, by implementing the strategy, it helps students to overcome the understanding problem in conversations as part of their learning process.

Moreover, repair strategies are used to overcome the anxiety problems of students in Indonesia [22]. Students dominantly used self-repair to overcome the anxiety when communicating in the classroom. In the same line, self-repair were used by Iranian EFL learners in conversation to improve their ability in speaking[23].

Speech acts is the actions performed in saying something. J. L. Austin (1962) is the first linguistic philosopher who developed theory of speech acts as in his monograph "How to do things with words" where language is related to perform action, and then it was developed by Rogers Searle (1969), who connected the theory to sociology and jurisprudence[24].

Searle (1979) classifies speech acts into five categories, namely: (a) Assertives: acts that commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition such as informing, explaining, swearing, concluding, and boasting. (b) Directives: acts that cause others to take a particular action, such as requesting, commanding, ordering, and advising. (c) Commissives: acts that commit a speaker to some future actions such as promising, offering, betting, and vowing. (d) Expressive: acts that express speakers' attitudes and emotions towards proposition such as congratulating, apologizing, and thanking. (e) Declarations: acts that change the reality according to the declaration's proposition, such as baptizing and electing[25]. In English teaching activities, there are various speech acts forms and strategies both formal and informal. A study showed that directive speech acts is one of speech acts tend to use by students in daily conversation [26]. Meanwhile, another study showed that assertive acts are used to improve the quality in maintaining the classroom discipline[27].

Most of studies on repair strategies generally discussed about the type of repair strategies used by adult learners in formal school. However there is not found yet study related to type of repair strategies used by young learners in formal school especially in

Indonesia Therefore, the present study raises two research problems;(1) What type of repair strategies do young EFL learners use to improve their speaking ability at English course, (2) What type of speech act do they use in daily speaking?

2. METHOD

This research is in the domain of qualitative descriptive research using the Conversation Analysis (CA) approach. With the CA study, the researcher observed that there was a lack of understanding in the use of dialogical language, especially for both participants, namely teachers and students. Conversations in the Teaching and Learning Process of English occur in the English Course classroom. Conversation occurs when the teacher gives instructions to students, students respond it but not according to the teacher's instructions, it forms a process of improvement.The participants of this study were Elementary level students at English Course. The data was obtained through recording the conversations between teacher and students in teaching and learning activities and was analyzed according to Schegloff'stheory[16] of repair strategies in Conversation Analysis and Searle's theory of speech acts [25].

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

3.1.1 Type of Repair Strategies

In accordance to the data analysis, there are two types of repair strategies used by the Indonesian young learners namely, other-initiated other-repair, and self-initiated self-repair.
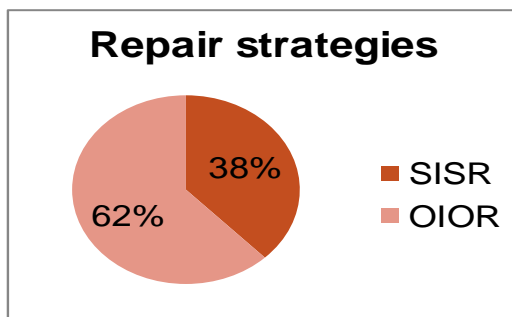

Figure 1 Type of repair strategies

The figure 1 shows that other – initiated other-repair (OIOR) is the most frequently used by students to improve their speaking ability during conversation activity. Meanwhile, self-initiated self – repair (SISR) is the second dominant used by students to improve their speaking ability in conversation class.

a) *Self - initiated Self – Repair* is a strategy a particular set of repair strategies such as *error correction, searching for a word, hesitation pauses, immediate lexical changes, false starts, and instantaneous repetitions,* for example:

Data 1:

Teacher	: We're going to review the result of your mid-term test.
Student	: Ok
Teacher	: So, let me know please what is your obstacle during the exam?
Student	:mmm..mmm..obstacle
Teacher	: yes,,any question?
Student	: No,,mmmmObstacle..obstacle is??
Teacher	: Obstacle is the same as problem.
Student	: Mmmm i think the write.
Student	: *The writing.*
Teacher	: O,, you mean that how to write and spell the words?
Student	: *Yeah, the spelling one. Because i am just a bit...forget mmmm*
Student	: *Sorry, i mean i forgot about it.*

The excerpt of **Data 1** was carried out by 2 people, namely the teacher and student. In the conversation above is included in self-repair. The utterance "*Sorry, i mean i forgot about it*" belongs to self-initiated-self repair because the student realized of the mistakes she made and she directly did error correction for the utterances.

b) *Other initiated other – repair* is the recipient of the problematic talk initiating the repair, but either he/she leaves it for the speakers of the trouble source to deal with the trouble themselves in the ensuing turn or he/she will repair it.

Data 2:

The conversation occurs in a classroom, in the midst of conversation five students asks for permission to go to the restroom.

Student : Miss, I will go to back please.

Teacher *: Pardon me,, do you mean that u will go to toilet*?

Student : Yes miss,,

Teacher : *O,,i see. You can say miss, may i go to toilet please,,,*

Student : *Miss, may i go to toilet please*

Teacher : Yes, sure

Student : Thank you

The excerpt of **Data 2** belongs to *other-initiated other-repair.*The bold utterances show that there is an error correction from the teacher. The utterance "***Pardon me,, do you mean that u will go to toilet***?" shows that **H** gives the judgement of what **S** has just said for the purpose of confirming information or repair it to make its meaning more explicit.

Data 3:

Teacher : Ok syasa, please write temple.

Student : It's T-E-M-P-L-E

Teacher :Yes, right. Then, now please have a look for the crosswords questions. That's good you answered it all correctly. But, i think the answers are the same with the essay one and you just need to copy it. So, how come it's having wrong?

Student : Yeah,,becausei'm hungry, so i'm not focus

Teacher : ***O,,,because you were hungry, so were not focus.***

Student : yes, i was hungry at that time. That's why i was not focus on it.

The excerpt above shows that the repair process is from the teacher.The utterance "***O,,,because you were hungry, so were not focus***" is an error correction from the teacher. The student does not realize that her grammatical sentence is not appropriate. Therefore at the same time, teacher repeats the sentences by repairing the grammatical error.

Data 4:

Teacher: O..really? you have read it when you were 4th grade?

Student: Yes

Teacher: ***Now, listen up and follow me after it. "I have read it when i was 4th grade elementary school***

Student: *I have read it when i was 4th grade elementary school*

The excerpt above shows the other-initiated other – repair between teacher and student. The utterance"***now, listen up and follow me after it. "I have read it when i was 4th grade elementary school"*** is the form of correction from the teacher. There was a grammatical error spoke by the student but he/she did not understand it.

3.1.2 *Speech Act used by students*

3.1.2.1 *Types of speech act used student to instructor*

Based on the data analyze, it shows that there are three types of speech acts used by young Indonesian EFL learners, namely Assertive, Directive and Expressive from Searle's theory.
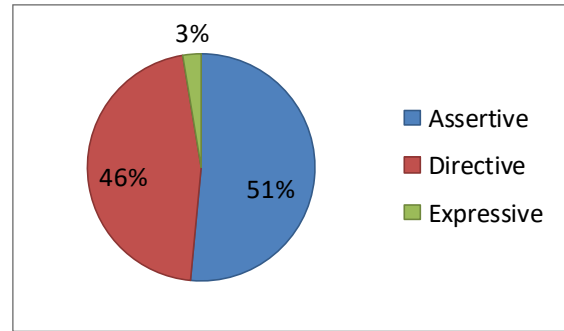
Figure 2 Type of speech

The figure 1 illustrates that Assertive is the most dominant used by young Indonesian EFL learners in conversation class with percentage 51% and they used Expressive the least often. It could be because, the teacher was the dominant actor in the classroom and the students were the ones who answered questions.

3.1.2.2 *The Application of Assertive*

According to Searle (1979) Assertive is categorized into two namely statements and explanations. Assertive speech acts is used to commit speakers of truth spoken. There are 6 types of speech acts which include *stating, informing, affirming, boasting, complaining and denying*. In this study, the researcher finds that there are 309 speeches. From those speeches, 78 the types of assertive speech acts, 26 informing speech acts, and 52 affirming speech acts. The research participants mostly used affirming and informing.
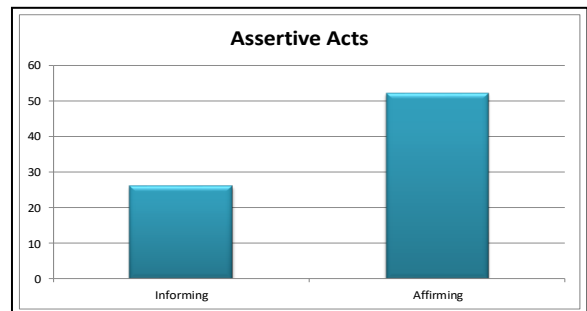
Figure 3 Type of speech acts

a.

Affirming is assertive which have the same illocutionary point, mode of achievement, degree of strength, proportional content conditions, preparatory conditions, and sincerity condition.

Data 5:

The conversation is between teacher and student with topic daily life routine. Teacher as the guide started the conversation by attracting student with some questions. Then, student responds the questions of teacher.

Teacher : Do you like going out for dinner or lunch?
Student : yes
Teacher : Okay so, do you love cooking?
Student : *Yaaa of course*

The excerpt above is a part of affirming in which the students explain and tell about her favorite hobby. And the utterance *Yaaa of course,* depicts the truth of the statement asked by the interlocutor. When the teacher asked a question to learner whether she liked cooking she replied the teacher's question assertively by saying "*yaa of course*". It is correlated with the definition of Assertive which meant by Searle that it kinds of speech act that commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition.

 b. Assertive Speech Acts of Informing

Informing is used by speaker to assert a hearer with the additional preparatory condition that the hearer does not already know what he is being informed.

Data 6:

The conversation takes place between teacher and student during conversation class. Teacher asked about personal identity and student as speaker explained it specifically so that the hearer accepted the information completely.

Teacher   : What's your full name?

Student   :*Ou..my   full   name   is AisyahSyafiraPutriWibawa*. *And you can call me Sasya.*

The speech acted by student in data (6) belongs to assertive speech act of informing. It can be seen from the excerpt *"Ou..my   full   name   is AisyahSyafiraPutriWibawa*. *And you can call me Sasya."*The speaker reveals her personal name completely so as it gives information to hearer.

3.2 Discussion

3.2.1 Repair Strategies used by students

Table 1. Strategies of Self - initiated Self – Repair

Strategies	Quantitative Results	
	Occurrence	Percentage (%)
Lexical trouble source correction	6	19
Searching for a word	1	3
Hesitation pauses	8	26
False start repairing	4	13
Immediate lexical changes	7	23
Repetitions	5	6
Total	**31**	**100**

Based on the table 3, it shows that there are six strategies of self-repair used by students in ELT process. Hesitation pause the most dominant used by students. It could be because, the students gain more time to think and express their thoughts more clearly.

Table 2. Strategies of Other - initiated Other – Repair

Strategies	Quantitative Results	
	Occurrence	Percentage (%)
Using question words	16	30
Repeating a part of the trouble source turn plus a question word	15	25
Judging ideas from the speaker's utterance	20	45
Total	**51**	**100**

The table 2 illustrates that there are three strategies of other-repair in ELT process namely Using question words, Repeating a part of the trouble source turn plus a question word, Judging ideas from the speaker's utterance. The strategy of Judging ideas from the speaker's was the most dominant used by the students. It could be because, the teacher is the dominant actor in the classroom who instructs and correct the students.

The repair process in the classroom activity is the same as the repair process in general. The different part is only on the role of teacher which is more dominant because teachers are the main actor in the ELT process, so that they are more frequently to control the situation.

It can be said that repair analysis is the process of correcting the pattern of words, grammar or pronunciation of the words to avoid the misunderstanding between speaker and hearer. As stated by Schegloff (2007b) stated that repair is used to ensure that the interaction does not freeze in its place when trouble arises, that intersubjectivity is maintained or restored, and the turn and sequence and activity can progress to possible completion.

Based on the data above, it shows that repair strategy can be implemented to teach English for young learner. There is 1 student who is aware for her mistake and repair it by herself. After repairing her sentence, she continues speaking confidently. It shows that eventhough she has made a mistake, it does not prevent her to speak English. Meanwhile, most of students does not realize for their mistakesfo so that the teacher should repair and ask the students to follow the correct one. Nevertheless, they are not afraid to repeat the sentences until they do correct one. Thus, by this case, it shows that repair strategy gives a positive impact to drill and motivate students to be confident to speak English.

The type of Other - initiated Other – Repair is used more frequently by the students. The teacher is the dominant actor in the classroom who instructs and correct the students. It is the same as the idea stated by McHoul (1990), type of repair other-initiation is more often to be used, while other-repair is not much dominant. In the same line, the study conducted by Aleksius and Saukah (2018) found that EFL learners with limited proficiency in English managed to take initiatives to overcome the understanding problem in conversations as part of their learning process [28].

In addition, in accordance with the result of the use of speech act in English conversation, it shows that assertive act is the most dominant used by the young learners during ELT process, because the students are the one who answer the teacher's questions and express their ides. It is correlated with the idea of Searle (1979) that assertive is used to commit the speaker to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition, e.g. stating, boasting, complaining, claiming and reporting.

4. CONCLUSION

This research points out that there are two types of repair starategy, namely Self-initiated Self-Repair, and Other-initiated other-repair. Meanwhile, the type of speech acts frequently used by the students is assertive act. From the discussion above, it can be concluded that children understand and already have the ability to repair mistakes they made, viewed from the side of individuals or others. In this case, teacher has a dominant role in controlling students to repair the words or sentences that students made.

There is 1 student who uses self-initiated self-repair, the purpose of self-initiated self-repair is, the students understand on the mistake they made and immediately corrects the error. The second category is Other initiated other - repair there are 4 students. Thus, it can be concluded that other initiates are more often to be used than self-initiated self-repair. In addition, by using a repair strategy, students are more confident to speak English even though they make mistakes.

Therefore, repair strategy can be said to be one of the effective methods for training and motivating students (young learners) in learning English. Because, by using Repair Strategy in learning English students know where the mistakes made when speaking both in pronunciation and grammar. In addition, students also have confidence when they have to say the same word or sentencebecause they have got a correction from the interlocutor.

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