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QUY NHON UNIVERSITY – CURTIN UNIVERSITY

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**REPAIR STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH CONVERSATIONS
AND THEIR APPLICATION IN TEACHING
ENGLISH INTERACTION SKILL TO B2 LEVEL LEARNERS**

**NGUYỄN THỊ QUỲNH HOA
NGUYỄN THỊ MINH HẠNH**

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CONTENTS

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

PART 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

PART 3

METHODOLOGY

PART 4

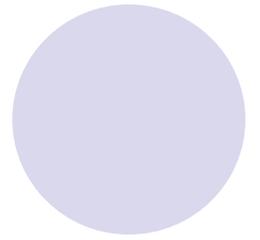
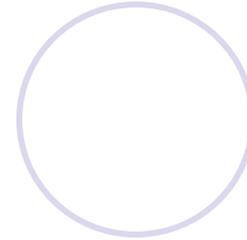
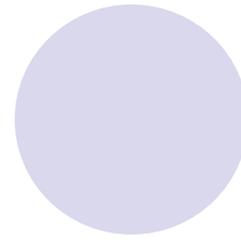
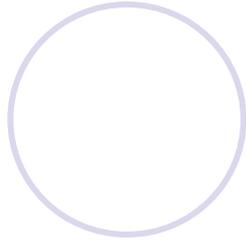
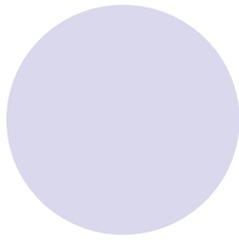
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

PART 5

APPLICATION

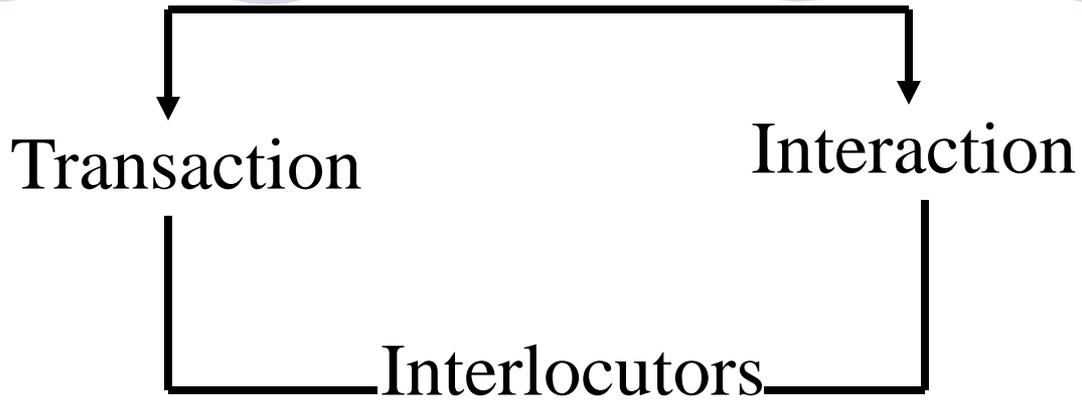
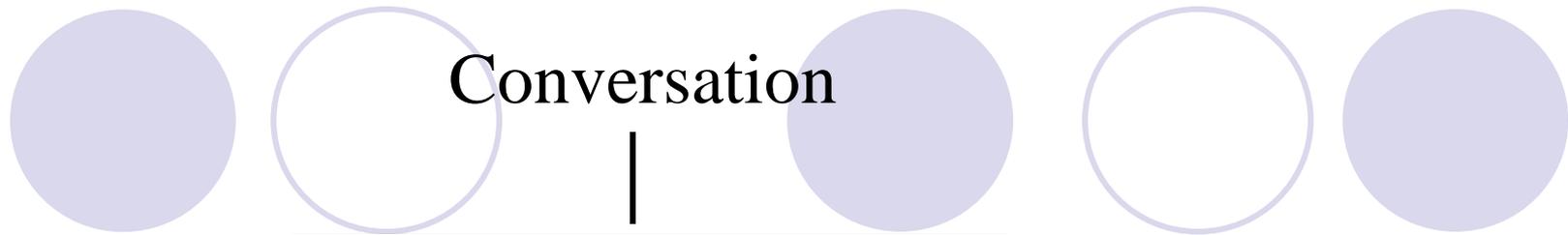
PART 6

CONCLUSION

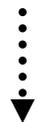


PART 1

INTRODUCTION



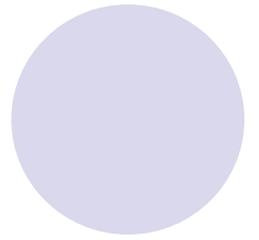
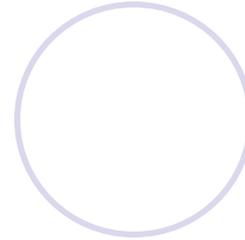
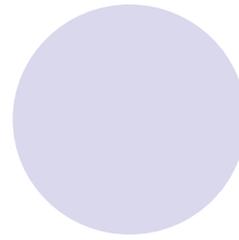
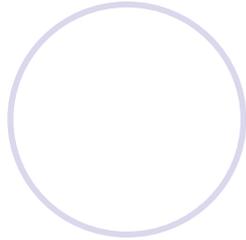
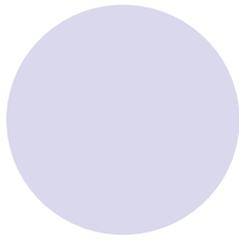
(producers + receivers)



Communication breakdowns



Communication repair
(Interaction strategy -CEFR)



Video

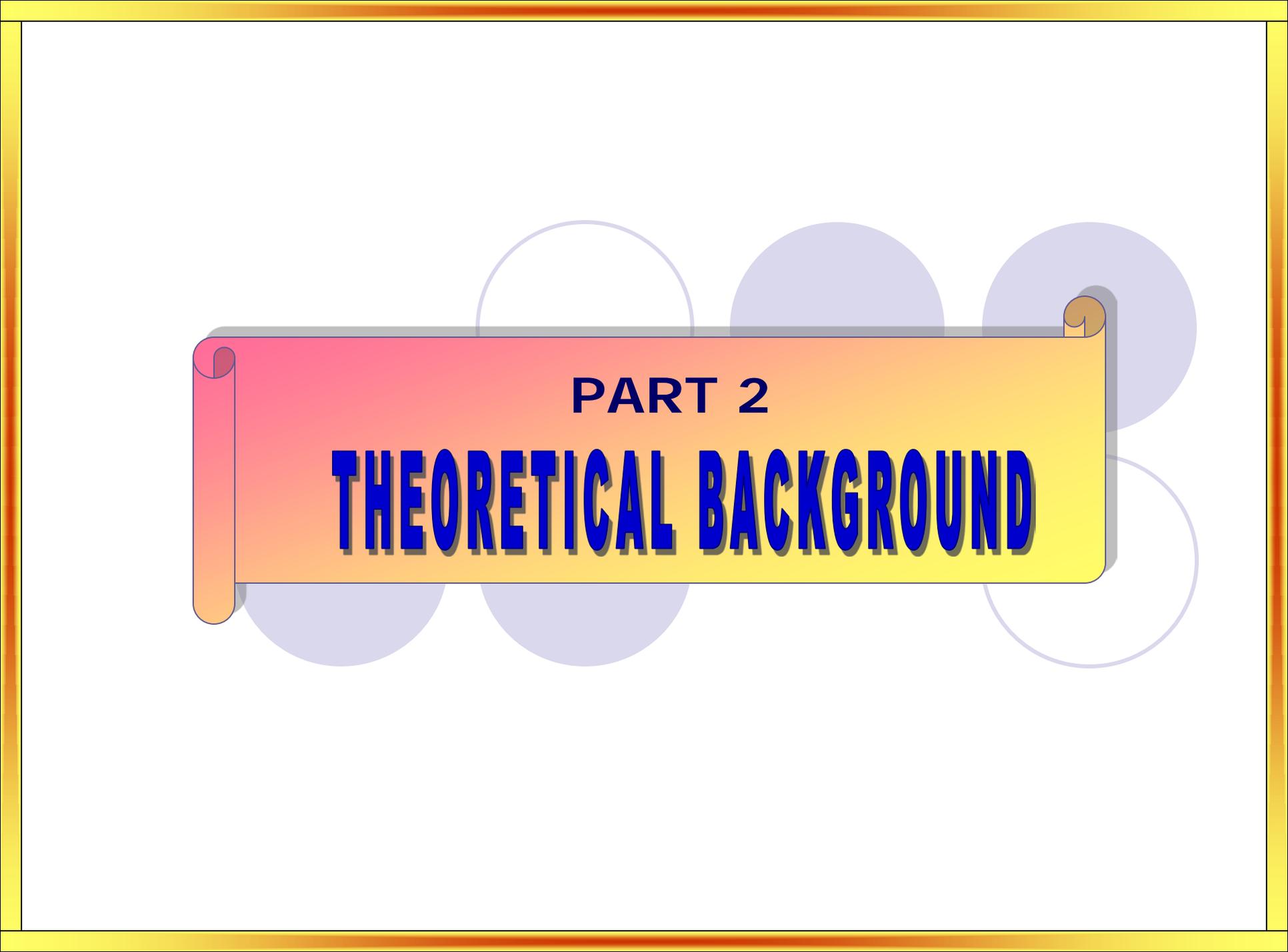
EXAMPLE OF A COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN

According to Schegloff et al. [6], “repair” is defined as *the treatment of trouble occurring in interactive language use* or “*a mechanism that operates in conversation to deal with problems in speaking, hearing, and understanding the talk in conversation*”.

It includes processes for mutual comprehension such as word search as well as a replacement or correction on hearable errors or mistakes.

6 levels of language competence in the (CEFR)

Level group	Level group name	Level	Description
A	Basic user	A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. - Can introduce themselves and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people they know and things they have. - Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
		A2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). - Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. - Can describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
B	Independent user	B1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. - Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken. - Can produce simple connected text on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. - Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
		B2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can understand the main ideas of complex texts on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in their field of specialization. - Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. - Can produce clear, detailed texts on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
C	Proficient user	C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer clauses, and recognize implicit meaning. - Can express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. - Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. - Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
		C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. - Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. - Can express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations.



PART 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Emanuel Abraham Schegloff 's Theory of Repair

Born in 1937 in New York, Schegloff is a distinguished professor of Sociology at the University of California at Los Angeles. With Harvey Sacks and Gail Jefferson, Schegloff was one of the principal creators of the field of Conversation Analysis. His work in interactional linguistics is similarly foundational.

Schegloff et al. focused on, for the first time, self-repair and other-repair with their positions and strategies in 1977 in the article *“The Preference for Self-Correction in the organization of Repair in Conversation”*

TYPES OF REPAIR

A diagram with the title 'TYPES OF REPAIR' in red. Below the title, two arrows point from a central point to two boxes. The left box is labeled 'Self-initiated repair' and the right box is labeled 'Other-initiated repair'. Above the boxes, there are five circles: a solid purple circle, an outlined purple circle, a solid purple circle, an outlined purple circle, and a solid purple circle. The arrows point to the second and fourth circles.

Self-initiated repair

Other-initiated repair

FOUR COMPONENTS

A diagram with the title 'FOUR COMPONENTS' in red. Below the title, four arrows point from a central point to four boxes. The boxes are labeled 'Trouble source', 'Repair initiator', 'Repair strategies', and 'Repair completion'.

Trouble
source

Repair
initiator

Repair
strategies

Repair
completion

Self - initiated repair

Self-initiated repair ordinarily involves the speaker of the trouble source initiating repair and prosecuting it to the conclusion in the same turn-taking.

(1) Olive: *You know Mary uh... oh...what was it...uh...Thompson* [5, p.363].

In (1), **the speaker (S)** cannot think out a word he needs for the first time of speaking, but in the same turn-taking after the hesitation marker *uh, oh*, **S** can find the right word “*Thompson*” and initiates the repair of his utterance.

Schegloff et al. [5] investigated and *systematically* described *self-repair in conversations*.

Self - repair
is conducted
through a
particular
set of repair
strategies

error correction

searching for a word

hesitation pauses

immediate lexical changes

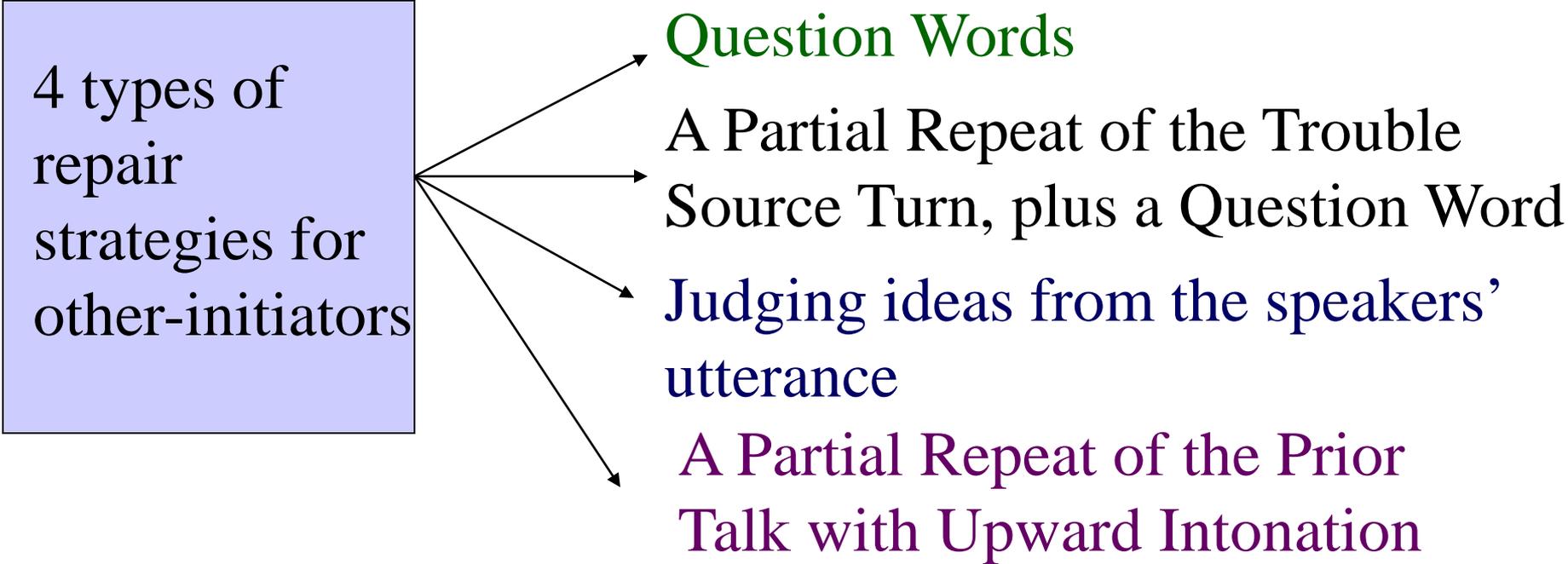
false starts

instantaneous repetitions

Other - initiated repair

According to Sack, Schegloff and Jefferson [5], *other-repair* generally involves a 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.

4 types of
repair
strategies for
other-initiators



```
graph LR; A[4 types of repair strategies for other-initiators] --> B[Question Words]; A --> C[A Partial Repeat of the Trouble Source Turn, plus a Question Word]; A --> D[Judging ideas from the speakers' utterance]; A --> E[A Partial Repeat of the Prior Talk with Upward Intonation];
```

Question Words

A Partial Repeat of the Trouble Source Turn, plus a Question Word

Judging ideas from the speakers' utterance

A Partial Repeat of the Prior Talk with Upward Intonation

(2) S : *Were you uh you were in therapy with a private doctor ?*

H: *yah*

S: *Have you ever tried a clinic?*

H: *What?*

S: *Have you ever tried a clinic?*

H: *(sigh) No, I don't want to go to a clinic. [5,*

^{p.367]}
In (2), instead of answering S's question after S's turn is finished, H initiates repair in the fourth line by using *wh-question word* "what" that displays his/her trouble in hearing or understanding S's prior talk. In the fifth line, S repeats his prior utterance in response to H's repair initiation.

(3)

S: *Well, I'm working through the Amfat Corporation.*

H: *The who?*

S: *Amfat Corporation, that's a holding company.*

[5, p.368]

In the above example (2.21), **H** *repeats a part of S' utterance plus the question word "What"* to show the wish for **S** to repair his/her utterance more clearly.

(4) S: *Why did I turn out this way?*

H: *You mean homosexual?*

S: *Yeah* [5, p.368].

In (4), **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.

(5) S: *Well Monday, let me think, Monday, Wednesday and Fridays*". *I'm home by one ten.*

H: *One ten?*

S: *Two o'clock. My class ends one ten.* [5, p.368].

H specifies the trouble source by *repeating a partial part of the prior talk **One ten** with an upward intonation* in the second turn. S completes the repair by confirming the utterance.

Common European Framework of Reference and its requirements of the interaction skill and repair for B2 level learners

Requirements for B2 level learners

Interaction skill

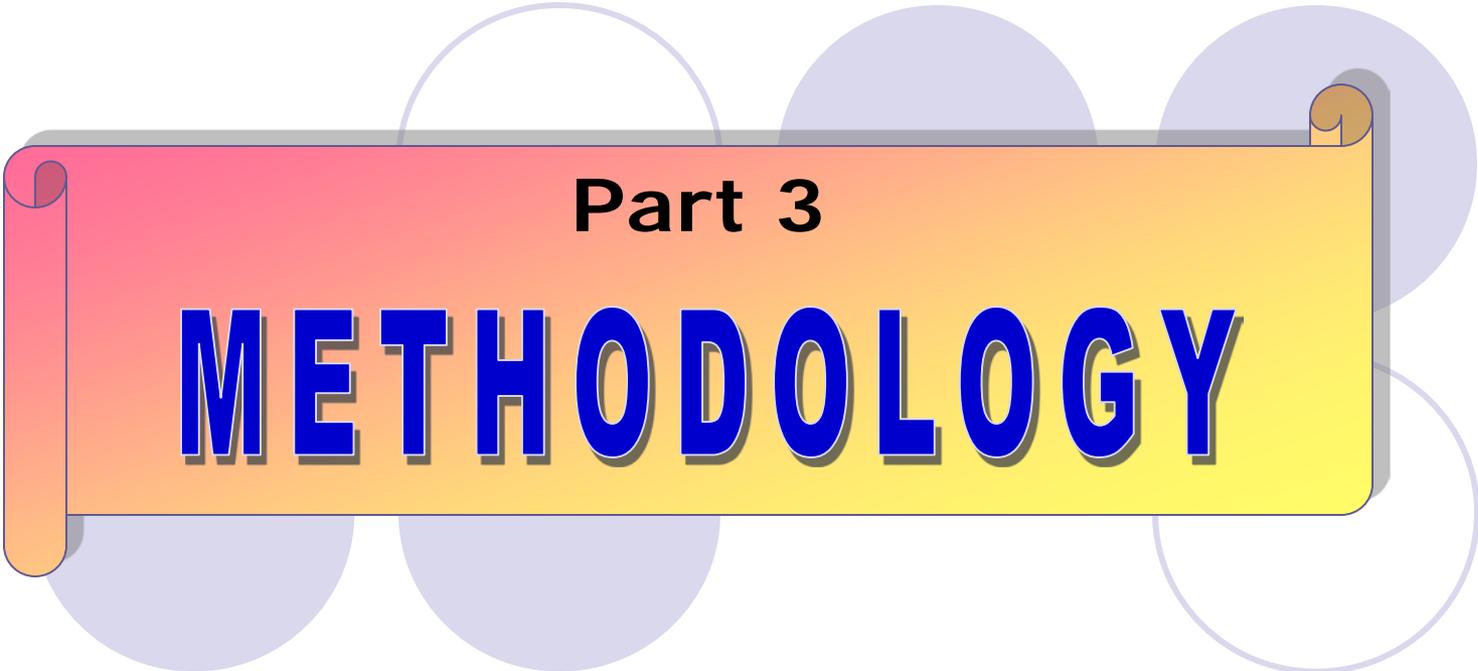
- The interlocutors can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general, academic, vocational or leisure topics, marking clearly the relationships between ideas. They can communicate spontaneously with good grammatical control without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say, adopting a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances.
- They can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction, and sustained relationships with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party. They can highlight the personal significance of events and experiences, account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanations and arguments. [1, p.74]

Common European Framework of Reference and its requirements of interaction skill and repair for B2 level learners

Communication Repair

- The speaker can correct slips and errors if he/she becomes conscious of them or if they have led to misunderstandings. He/she can make a note of 'favourite mistakes' and consciously monitor speech for it/them.

B2-level learners have already accumulated a relatively wide vocabulary and a considerable amount of linguistic knowledge, so they can flexibly and effectively employ the strategies of repair to ask for repair or to self-repair so that they can gain more effectiveness in their conversations.



Part 3

METHODOLOGY

Methodology



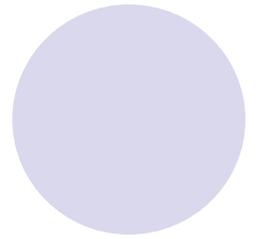
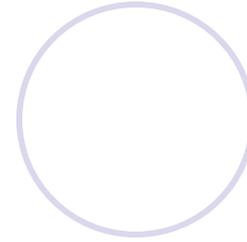
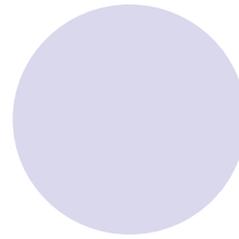
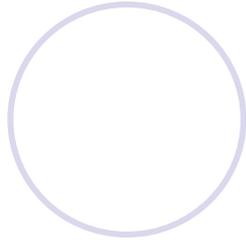
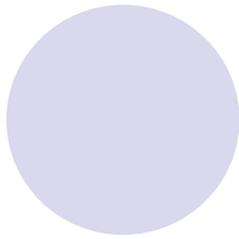
The *Descriptive* method



The *Analytic* method

Four following films as sources of data in the research

Order	Names of films	Types of films	Languages of subtitles	Directors	Episodes	Year of publication
1	<i>Friends</i>	American television sitcom	English	Kauffman, M., Crane, D., Burrons, J.	2/236	1994
2	<i>Extra English</i>	Language Education televisio n	English and Vietnamese	Bethell, A.	13/30	2002
3	<i>Hannah Montana</i>	American musical comedy	English and Vietnamese	Poryer, M., Correll, R., O'Brien, B.	18/98	2006
4	<i>The Intern</i>	American comedy	English	Meyers, N.	No episode	2015

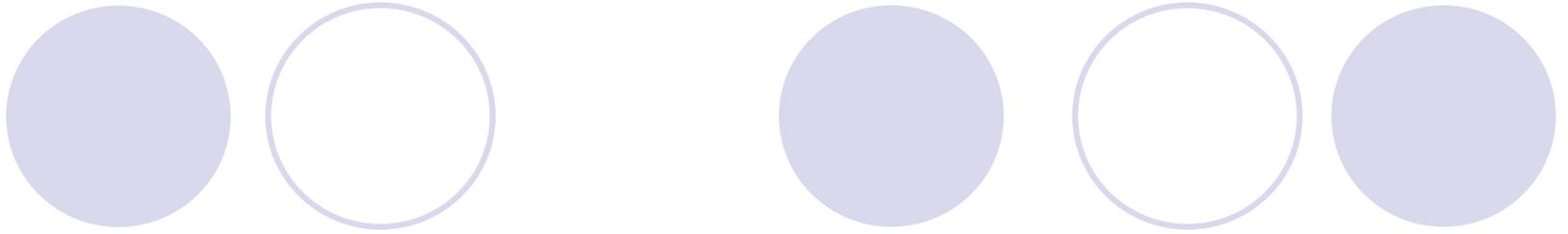


Part 4

FINDINGS

Strategies of Self-Repair in English Conversations

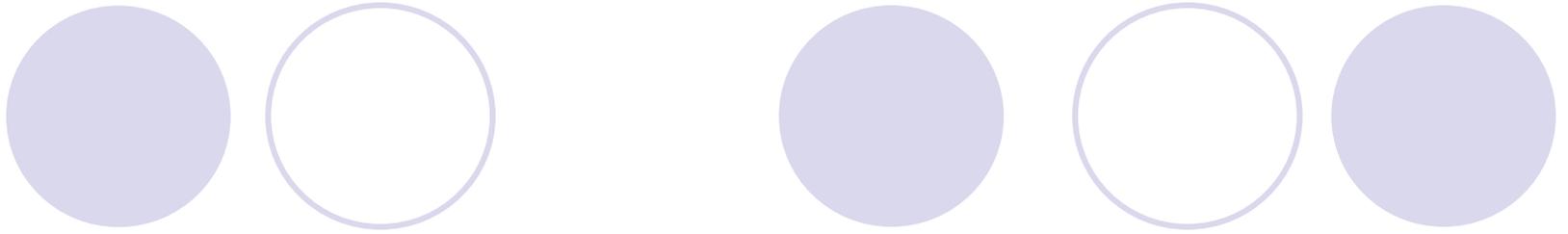
Strategies	Quantitative Results	
	Occurrence	Percentage (%)
1. Lexical trouble source correction	6	19
2. Searching for a word	1	3
3. Hesitation pauses	8	26
4. False start repairing	4	13
5. Immediate lexical changes	7	23
6. Repetitions	5	16
Total	31	100



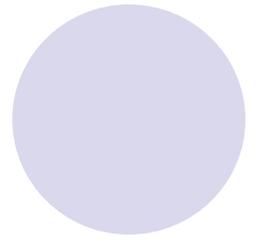
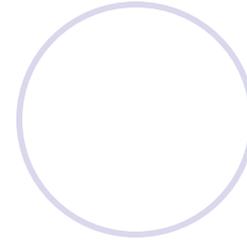
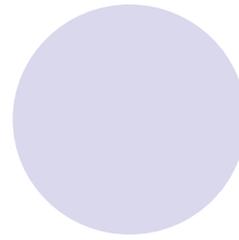
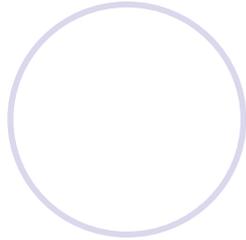
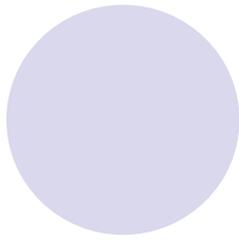
The strategy *Hesitation pauses* is used more frequently than other strategies. This strategy helps speakers gain more time to think and express their thoughts more clearly. The strategies of *Immediate lexical change* and *Lexical trouble source correction* are also employed a great deal in conversations. These two strategies help speakers repair their ideas so clearly and avoid possible misunderstanding from the hearers.

Strategies of Other-Repair in English Conversations

Strategies	Quantitative Results	
	Occurrence	Percentage (%)
1. Using question words	18	26
2. Repeating a part of the trouble source turn plus a question word	15	22
3. Judging ideas from the speaker's utterance	14	20
4. Repeating a part of the speaker's talk with upward intonation	22	32
Total	69	100



The strategy of *Repeating a part of the speaker's talk with upward intonation* takes up 32%. Next, the strategy of *Using question words* is used with a percentage of 26%. This shows that the hearers want to confirm the information from the speakers or they want to show some feelings to the speakers' utterance.



Part 5

APPLICATION

Requirements

The interlocutors can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general, academic, vocational or leisure topics, marking clearly the relationships between ideas [1, p.74].

Suggestions

+ **TEACHERS:**

- prepare a lot of speaking activities with different topics for learners.

- ask the learners to discuss their topics with their different partners.

+ **LEARNERS (SPEAKERS):**

- use strategies of self-repair such as *immediate lexical change* or *trouble source correction*.

- employ the strategy *Hesitation pause* or *Repetitions* when they want to gain more time or to mention another thing.

+ **LEARNERS (HEARERS):**

- use the strategy of other-repair such as *Repeating a part of the speaker's talk with upward intonation* if they want to have confirmation from what the speaker has just said or if they want to express their feelings.

Requirements

They can communicate spontaneously with good grammatical control without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say, adopting a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances
[1,p.74].

Suggestions

+ **LEARNERS (HEARERS):**

- *Using question words and Judging ideas from the speaker's utterance* are advisable when the hearer needs some clarification from what the speaker has just mentioned to her/him.

Requirements

They can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction, and sustained relationships with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party. They can highlight the personal significance of events and experiences, account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanations and arguments [1, p.74].

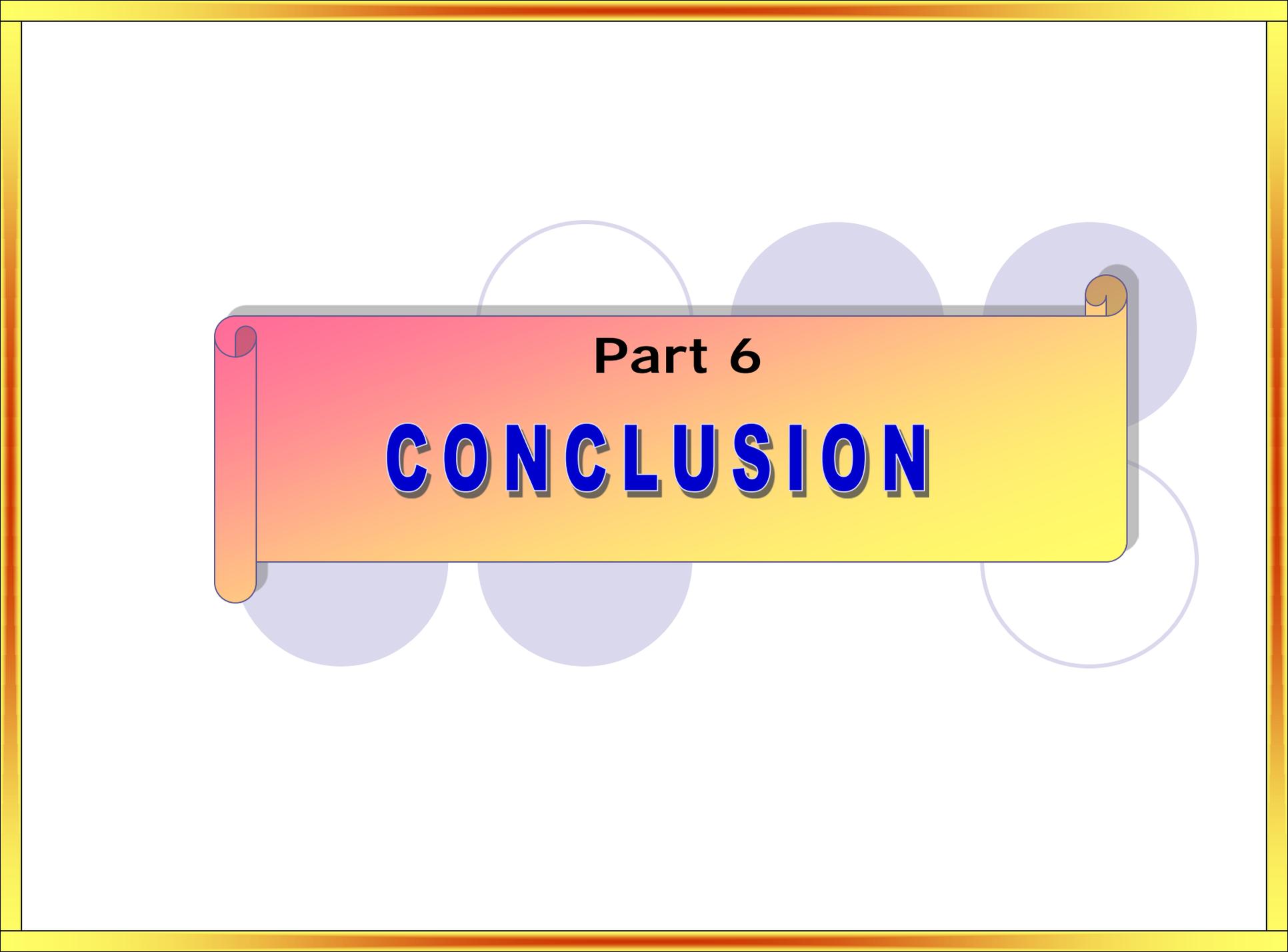
Suggestions

+ **TEACHERS:**

- guide learners to read more newspapers, books or watch more TV to enrich their background knowledge so that they can provide examples, explanations for their talks.

+ **LEARNERS:**

- are advised to use all of the above strategies of repair, depending on contexts or their circumstances, to make their conversations become effective as expected.



Part 6

CONCLUSION

The results of the survey show that conversations from English films contain nearly all of the features of strategies of repair according to the repair theory of Schegloff et al.

There are six self-repair strategies namely *Lexical trouble source correction*, *Searching for a word*, *Hesitation pauses*, *False start repairing*, *Immediate lexical changes* and *Repetitions*

For other-repair, there are four strategies namely *Using question words*, *Repeating a part of the trouble source turn plus a question word*, *Judging ideas from the speaker's utterance* and *Repeating a part of the speaker's talk with upward intonation*.

All these ten repair strategies, if properly applied, can be of great significance in teaching the spoken interaction skill, especially to B2-level learners of English.

The features of the strategies of self-repair and other-repair provide learners with an insight into how to solve the problems causing communication breakdowns from the speakers and know how to employ relevant strategies to show their problems in hearing and understanding the speakers' utterances.

It is clear that making good use of repair strategies can facilitate and promote learners' fluency, accuracy and effectiveness in their conversations, thereby contributing to the methods of teaching the English speaking skill.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR

ATTENTION!