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Effects of the Type of Dyad on Repair Patterns and Linguistic Features in Repairs

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The present study examined the role of language proficiency in dyadic discourse in the organization of repairs and the distribution of linguistic features contained in repairs. One native speaker of English and five non-native speakers participated and formed three dyads: one same-proficiency NNS-NNS (non-native speaker), one different-proficiency NNS-NNS, and one NS (native speaker)-NNS dyads. Results showed that overall repair patterns in this type of interaction were more conversational than didactic, and that the degree of difference in proficiency between the participants in the dyad influenced repair patterns and the distribution of linguistic features in relation to repair patterns. Also, discussed in the present paper are some implications of the results and other issues related to language learning.

[corrective feedback/self-repair/other-initiated repair/focus on form]

I. INTRODUCTION

Repairs, the phenomena of correction, have been one of the most intriguing issues that have been much discussed in language-related research, especially in terms of their organizations, functions, cross-linguistic differences (Fox, Hayashi, & Jasperson, 1996; Jefferson, 1974, 1987; Moerman, 1977; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, 1987, 1997, 2000; Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977; van Lier, 1988; Waring, 2005;

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Wong, 2000) and language learning that involves corrective feedback during negotiation for meaning in conversational interaction (Chaudron, 1977; Chun, Day, Chenoweth, & Luppescu, 1982; Ellis, 2007; Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006; Iwashita, 2003; Kim, 2007; Loewen, 2005; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Long, Inagaki, & Ortega, 1998; Lyster, 1998a, 1998b, 2004; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Mackey 1999, 2006; Mackey & Oliver, 2002; Mackey & Philp, 1998; McDonough, 2005, 2007; McDonough & Mackey, 2006; Nakahama, Tyler, & van Lier, 2001; Oliver, 1995, 1998, 2000; Panova & Lyster, 2002; Seong, 2006). Repairs to incomprehensible utterances and initiation for repair are made by speakers themselves or others. In general, repair is considered as an inevitable (and effective) conversational move to precipitate intelligibility and better communication as a whole; Schegloff (1997) and Waring (2005) discuss other possible roles that other-initiated repairs and repair initiations may play, the roles called unofficial businesses of repairs/repair initiation (beyond the purpose of achieving the comprehension of what has been said or is being said, official businesses). Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977) note that repairs are utilized in an organized and structured manner, and that self-repair is a preferred repair phenomenon to other-repair in everyday conversation, arguing that "the organization of repair in conversation provides centrally for self-correction, which can be arrived at by the alternative routes of self-initiation and other-initiation - routes which are themselves so organized as to favor self-initiated self-repair" (p. 377). Preference for self-correction was also evidenced in a comparative study involving Tai and English (Moerman, 1977). Schegloff et al. claim that other-initiation is withheld in order to provide another opportunity for the speaker to self-repair the trouble source (incomprehensible part of the utterance in a preceding turn) in the transition space/transition relevance place (where a transition from one turn to a next is likely to occur; see Sacks et al., 1974 for more information). They suggest:

> Indeed, other-initiations regularly are withheld a bit PAST the possible completion of trouble-source turn; not only does a withhold get them specifically positioned in next turn, but it can get 'next turn' itself delayed a bit. In such cases, other-initiations occur after a slight gap, the gap evidencing a withhold beyond the completion of trouble-source turn – providing an 'extra' opportunity, in an expanded transition space, for speaker of trouble source to self-initiate repair (p. 374).

In their discussions on the locus of other-initiated repairs, Schegloff (2000) and Wong (2000) also note that other initiations of repair can also occur in a later turn, not just in the one following the trouble-source turn, which was the main position of other-initiation in Schegloff et al.'s (1977) original work. Schegloff et al. (1977) also suggest that other-

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correction (subtype of other-repair) can be "a device for dealing with those who are still learning or being taught to operate with a system which requires, for its routine operation, that they be adequate self-monitors and self-correctors as a condition of competence" (p. 381). In this regard, van Lier (1988) distinguishes pedagogically-oriented didactic repairs that frequently occur in language classrooms from conversational repairs that Schegloff et al. mainly discussed. van Lier (1998) lists the following kinds of repair trajectories: 1) same-turn self-repair, 2) transition-space self-repair, 3) third-turn self-repair, 4) other-initiation/self-repair, 5) other-repair, and 6) self-initiation/other-repair. He shows that classroom conversations may result in different preferential patterns of repair trajectories, compared to those likely to take place in general conversation.

Accordingly, if the settings have an impact on repair patterns, it is reasonable to assume that proficiency in the language used as a medium of communication may also affect the overall organization of repairs when non-native speakers are involved as interlocutors. Given the potential impact on the repair patterns that interlocutors' proficiency may have, it may be beneficial to explore the degree to which proficiency influences the organization of repairs and the distribution of linguistic features contained in repairs. It may provide valuable insights into the nature/mechanism of repairs, further facilitating our understanding of conversational interaction, regardless of whether the organization of repairs that occur in conversation that involves non-native speakers may be separable from a more general research framework of repairs (e.g., Schegloff, 2000; Wong, 2000). Despite some previous research on the role of proficiency in the structures of conversational interaction (e.g., Storch, 2002), few studies have examined the effects of learner proficiency on repair patterns. The present study is designed to investigate this aspect of possible variability, that is, how overall repair patterns are affected by the type of dyad: NS (native speaker) - NNS (non-native speaker), same-proficiency NNS-NNS, and different-proficiency NNS-NNS dyads. Below are four research questions (RQs) investigated in the present study.

RQ 1. How do repair patterns of each type of dyad (e.g., NS-NNS, NNS-NNS) fit into Schegloff et al.'s and van Lier's classifications of repair routes?
RQ 2. Do repair patterns in NS-NNS discourse differ from those in NNS-NNS discourse?
RQ 3. Does proficiency affect repair patterns in NNS-NNS dyads?
RQ 4. Do linguistic features in repairs differ in terms of frequency for each dyad?

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II. RESEARCH DESIGN

1. Participants

Five ESL learners (NNSs) and one native speaker of English (NS) participated in the present study. Four of the five NNS participants (two male and two female students) were attending an ESL program at a North American university at the time of the study; one high-intermediate and three intermediate learners of English based on the placement test administered at the beginning of the semester. Three of them are from the same L1 background, Korean, and the other from an Arabic-speaking country. One of the three Korean students was a high-intermediate learner of English and the remaining three NNS participants (including the Arabic student) were intermediate-level learners. The other NNS participant was an advanced-level NNS participant attending a graduate program as a doctoral student at the same university; the participant's L1 is Japanese. The NS participant was an undergraduate student of the same institution; he was a conversational partner of the high-intermediate NNS participant. The average age of the NNS participants was 25.4 ranging from 22 to 34; the NS participant was in his early 20s. As for the four NNS participants attending the ESL program, their average length of study in the US was 6.75 months; the advanced-level NNS participant had stayed for more than 7 years. Three types of dyads were formed: intermediate-intermediate, intermediate-advanced, and high-intermediate-NS dyads. It should be noted that the performance of the high-intermediate ESL learner did not differ too much from that of the other intermediate students as evidenced in the conversational activities implemented in the present study. Therefore, her level of proficiency is referred to as intermediate throughout the paper.

2. Activity and Procedure

The participants of each dyad met the researcher to receive instructions. Then, each dyad carried out one fifteen- or sixteen-minute conversational activity where they talked about two topics provided at the beginning of the session, an information exchange activity (see Pica, Kanagy, & Falodun (1993) for more information about different types of interactional tasks): 1) favorite places to visit in DC or some other tourist attractions, 2) favorite TV shows, movies, and actors. Their conversion was tape-recorded and transcribed later for analyses.

3. Coding and Analysis

Based on the transcripts, repair patterns for each dyad were identified and classified. The patterns identified were compared to those classified by Schegloff et al. (1977) and van

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Lier (1988). The three dyads were compared to each other in terms of repair patterns and frequency of each pattern. Repairs were classified and counted in relation to linguistic features so that the comparisons among the dyads were made in terms of the frequency of repairs based on those linguistic features. Four types of linguistic features were identified: discourse/fact, grammar, word choice, and pronunciation.

1) Discourse/Fact

This category includes discourse level repairs that are above the sentence level and repairs made to utterances in relation to factual knowledge. Below are two examples of this category (Excerpts 1 and 2).

(1) Excerpt 1 (NNS initiated the topic on Pentagon City)

1	NNS:	*Because I just got my room in Pentagon City.*		
2	NS:	*You got a room in Pentagon City?*	←	Other-initiation
3	NNS:	*Yeah, for next semester.*	←	Self-repair
4	NS:	*Really?*		
5	NNS:	*Yeah, I am not gonna live in dormitory any more.*		

(2) Excerpt 2

1	NS:	*What's your favorite movie?*		
2	NNS:	*Romantic comedy.*		
3	NS:	*That's a kind of movie.*	←	Other-repair
4	NNS:	*Yeah, kind of movie.*		
5	NS:	*What's your favorite romantic comedy?*		
6	NNS:	*Have you seen "Usual Suspect"?*		
7	NS:	*Yes, that's not a romantic comedy.*	←	Other-repair
8	NNS:	*Yeah, I know.*		
9	NS:	*It's a thriller.*	←	Other-repair

2) Grammar

Included in this category are repairs that are concerned with syntactic, morphological, or morphosyntactic features (agreement in tense, number, person, etc.) contained in utterances. Excerpts 3 and 4 are typical examples of this category; a discourse level other-initiated repair is also observed in Excerpt 4. Repairs on grammar are underlined in the excerpts.

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(3) Excerpt 3

1 NNS1: *U-huh.*

2 NNS2: *But while he were, he was in prison in the mafia house…* ← Self-repair

(4) Excerpt 4

1 NNS2: *Yeah, you must go on Christmas. So…which country, let's talk about your, which country do you like in Europe?*

2 NNS1: *The country?*

3 NNS2: *Yeah, the country that you you have been visit, visiting, I mean, you have been you have visited and you like it in Europe, France.* ← Self-repair

3) Word Choice

In this category, lexical items are the targets of repairs. Semantic issues are also involved in this type of repair (e.g., a choice of an appropriate preposition and the provision of other lexical options). In Excerpt 5, the NNS1 self-initiates a repair in search of the word "sentence," and this is followed by a second-turn other-repair. Excerpt 6 describes a repair to an inappropriate use of a preposition.

(5) Excerpt 5

1 NNS1: (talking about a TV show) *One younger brother into the prison because his older brother in the prison and the his older brother uh uh sten sten what is it? Punishment?*

2 NNS2: *The sentence?* ← Other-repair

3 NNS1: *Sentence was the murder the president's brother.*

4 NNS2: *Oh my god.*

(6) Excerpt 6

1 NNS1: *There were Season 2. The season 1 is the story about how do they escape about the prison.*

2 NNS2: *From the prison.* ← Other-repair

4) Pronunciation

This category is concerned about repairs that are provided when a word is not clearly pronounced or understood in a phonological sense. Below are examples of this category.

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(7) Excerpt 7

1	NNS1:	*Yeah sure ah have you been to Dubai [tdubay]*		
2	NNS2:	*Tibet?*		
3	NNS1:	*Dubai.*	←	Self-repair

(8) Excerpt 8

1	NS:	*And Florence is nice. Don't go to Bagdad (it was not clearly uttered)*		
2	NNS:	*Don't go to Bag?*		
3	NS:	*Bagdad.*	←	Self-repair
4	NNS:	*What is Bag?*		
5	NS:	*Bagdad in Iraq?*	←	Self-repair
6	NNS:	*Ahaaaa.*		

III. RESULTS

A total of one hundred and nineteen repairs were produced in the three dyads during a 15- or 16-minute conversational activity. As can be seen in Table 1 and Figure 1, the participants produced self-repairs far more than other-repairs. Of one hundred and nineteen repairs, one hundred (84.03%) were self-repairs, indicating the overwhelming preference for self-repair; only 19 instances of other-repair were observed (15.97%). This supports Schegloff et al.'s (1977) claim in favor of self-repair over other-repair. Also, as the activity was conversational in the out-of-class setting, most of the repairs identified were conversational rather than didactic (see for example Excerpt 6 for a didactic repair).

1. RQ 1: How do repair patterns of each dyad fit into Schegloff et.al's (1977) and van Lier's (1988) classifications of repair trajectories?

In addition to the overwhelming preference for self-repair, a majority of self-repairs occurred in the pattern of "Same-turn self-repair" as shown in Table 2 and Figure 2; it should be noted that although a few clear cases of self-repairs in the transition place were observed, since some other self-repairs were not clear-cut in terms of whether they were in the same-turn self-repair pattern or in the transition-space self-repair pattern, it was quite a difficult task to distinguish the two (i.e. finding a withhold of other-initiation or that particular moment was hard to accomplish), which led to the decision to include both types of self-repairs in the same-turn self-repair category. Of ninety-nine instances of self-repairs, sixty-seven (67.00%) took place in this pattern. Thirty self-repairs occurred in the "other-initiated self-repair in the third turn" trajectory (30.00%). Self-repairs in the third turn

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rarely occurred (3.00%). The same order of preference was observed in all dyads; the same-turn self-initiated pattern was the most preferred, the other-initiated self-repair pattern the second most preferred, and the third-turn self-initiated the least preferred.

Other-repairs were not the preferred pattern in the present study. However, other-repairs were quite frequent in the different-proficiency NNS-NNS and the NS-NNS dyads, as compared to the same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad. No self-repair in the transition space or the same-turn other-repairs were observed in the present study; the former may often occur in everyday conversations and the latter in L2 classrooms. Only a few instances of the self-initiated other-repair pattern, a characteristic of classroom conversations, occurred.

TABLE 1

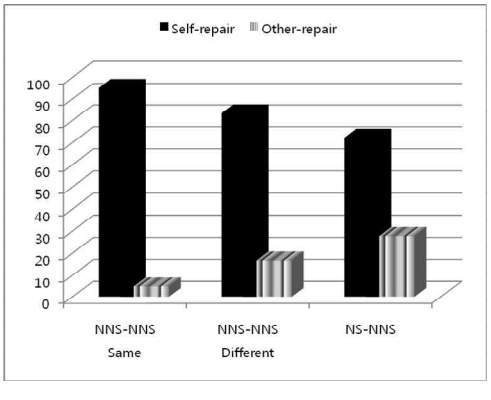
Overall Distribution of Self-Repairs and Other-Repairs

	Self-repair				Other-repair			
	SI Same	OI Third	SI Third	Total	W/ SI	W/O SI	Total	Grand total
NNS-NNS Same	31	7	1	39 (95.12)	1	1	2 (4.88)	41 (100)
NNS-NNS Different	21	12	2	35 (83.33)	2	5	7 (16.67)	42 (100)
NS-NNS Dyad	15	11	0	26 (72.22)	3	7	10 (27.78)	36 (100)
Total	67	30	3	100 (84.03)	6	13	19 (15.97)	119 (100)

Note. SI = self-initiation; OI = other-initiation; W/ SI = with self-initiation; W/O SI = without self-initiation; Same = same turn; Third = third turn. All other-repairs occurred in the second turn.

FIGURE 1

Overall Distribution of Self-Repairs and Other-Repairs



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Although the data do not clearly provide an answer to the first research question, an overall tendency indicates that the repair patterns observed in this study may fit better into Schegloff et al.'s (1977) conversational repair trajectories rather than van Lier's (1988) didactic/classroom-specific repair trajectories: 1) a few instances of self-repairs in the transition space although not coded, 2) a relatively smaller number of other-repairs, and 3) a complete lack of same-turn other-repair that is considered as classroom-specific (van Lier, 1988). This is not unexpected given all the dyadic interactions occurred in out-of-class conversational contexts, not in classroom contexts.

2. RQ 2: Do repair patterns in NS-NNS discourse differ from those in NNS-NNS discourse?

In the same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad, the "Same-turn self-repair" pattern was, as shown in Table 2 and Figure 2, clearly preferred (79.49% of their total self-repairs), followed by the different-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad (60.00% of their total self-repairs) and NS-NNS dyad (57.69%). In the case of other-initiated self-repairs, the order of preference is different. The NS-NNS dyad produced 11 repairs of this pattern (42.31%), the different-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad 12 repairs (34.29%), and the same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad 7 repairs (17.95%).

TABLE 2

Distribution of Self-Repairs by Group

	Self-repair			
	SI Same	OI Third	SI Third	Total
NNS-NNS Same	31 (79.49)	7 (17.95)	1 (2.56)	39
NNS-NNS Different	21 (60.00)	12 (34.29)	2 (5.71)	35
NS-NNS Dyad	15 (57.69)	11 (42.31)	0 (0%)	26
Total	67 (67.00)	30 (30.00)	3 (3.00)	100

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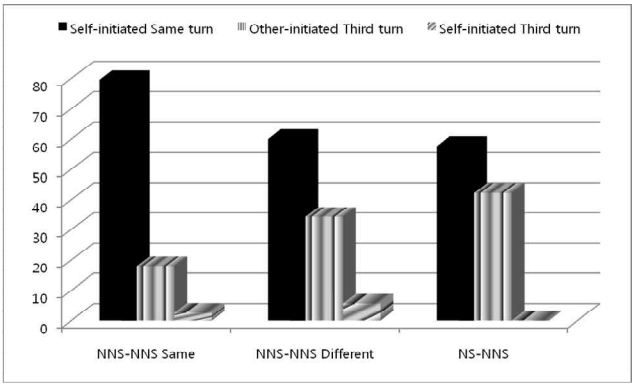
FIGURE 2

Distribution of Self-Repairs by Group



More importantly, as seen in Table 3, the combined frequency of self-repairs that occurred in the two NNS-NNS dyads (70.27%) was higher than that of the NS-NNS dyad's self-repairs (57.69%) in terms of the same-turn self-repair pattern. However, more other-initiated self-repairs were observed in the NS-NNS dyad (42.31%) than in the two NNS-NNS dyads (25.68%). This shows there is an interaction between the pattern of self-repair and the type of dyad (NS-NNS vs. NNS-NNS). The repair patterns in the NS-NNS discourse differed from those in the NNS-NNS discourse.

TABLE 3

Comparison of Distribution of Self-Repairs by NNS-NNS and NS-NNS Dyads

	Self-repair			
	SI Same	OI Third	SI Third	Total
NNS-NNS Combined	52 (70.27)	19 (25.68)	3 (4.05)	74
NS-NNS Dyad	15 (57.69)	11 (42.31)	0 (0%)	26
Total	67	30	3	100

3. RQ 3: Does proficiency affect repair patterns in the NNS-NNS dyads?

As seen in Table 4, the role of proficiency was evidenced in the present study. The same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad produced more same-turn self-repairs than the different-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad (79.49% and 60.00%, respectively).

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TABLE 4

Comparison of Distribution of Self-Repairs by Same-Proficiency NNS-NNS and Different-Proficiency NNS-NNS Dyads

	Self-repair			
	SI Same	OI Third	SI Third	Total
NNS-NNS Same	31 (79.49)	7 (17.95)	1 (2.56)	39
NNS-NNS Different	21 (60.00)	12 (34.29)	2 (5.71)	35
Total	52	19	3	74

However, less other-initiated self-repairs were observed in the same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad than in the different-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad (17.95% for the same-proficiency group and 34.29% for the different-proficiency group). As in the comparison of the NS-NNS with the NNS-NNS dyads, there is an interaction between proficiency and the repair pattern.

TABLE 5

Overall Distribution of Self-Repairs and Other-Repairs by Linguistic Features for Same- Proficiency NNS-NNS Dyad

	Self-repair				Other-repair			
	SI Same	OI Third	SI Third	Total	W/ SI	W/O SI	Total	Grand total
Dis/Fact	17	7	1	25 (64.10)	0	0	0 (0.00)	25 (60.98)
Grammar	10	0	0	10 (25.64)	0	0	0 (0.00)	10 (24.39)
Word	4	0	0	4 (10.26)	1	1	2 (100)	6 (14.63)
Pronun	0	0	0	0 (0.00)	0	0	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
Total	31	7	1	39 (100)	1	1	2 (100)	41 (100)

Note. Dis/Fact = Discourse/Fact; Pronun = Pronunciation.

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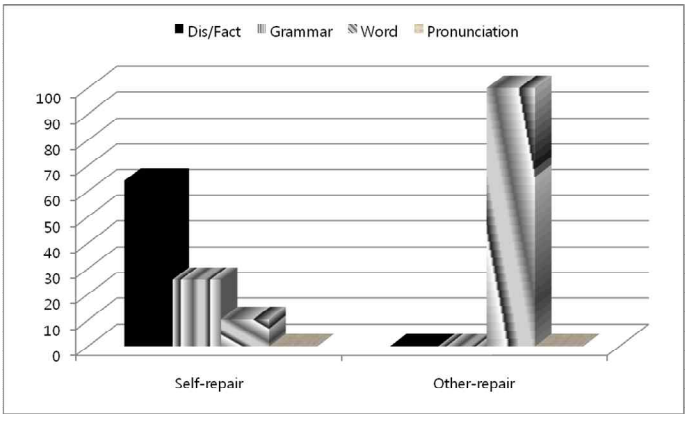
FIGURE 3

Overall Distribution of Self-Repairs and Other-Repairs by Linguistic Features for Same-Proficiency NNS-NNS Dyad



4. RQ 4: Do linguistic features in repairs differ in terms of frequency for each dyad?

Overall, discourse/fact-related repairs were the most frequently observed in all three dyads. Of thirty-nine self-repairs that occurred in the same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad, twenty-five (64.10%) were related to discourse or factual knowledge; of course, most of them are in the same-turn self-repair pattern (see Table 5 and Figure 3). The next frequent feature was about grammar. Ten repairs (25.64%) were produced in the same-turn self-repair pattern. Six repairs were observed in relation to word choice; four of them are in the same-turn self-repair pattern and two in the other-repair pattern (one with self-initiation and the other without it). No pronunciation-related repair was found.

With regard to the different-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad, twenty-nine out of thirty-four self-repairs (82.86%) were about discourse or factual knowledge (see Table 6 and Figure 4). Sixteen of them were in the same-turn self-repair pattern. Also observed were eleven repair instances of the other-initiated self-repair pattern. Only 2 repairs related to grammar and 3 repairs to word choice occurred in the same-turn self-repair pattern. Interesting to note is that four out of seven other-repairs were about word choice and they occurred in the pattern of the second-turn other-repair without self-initiation. One pronunciation repair in the other-initiated self-repair pattern was observed.

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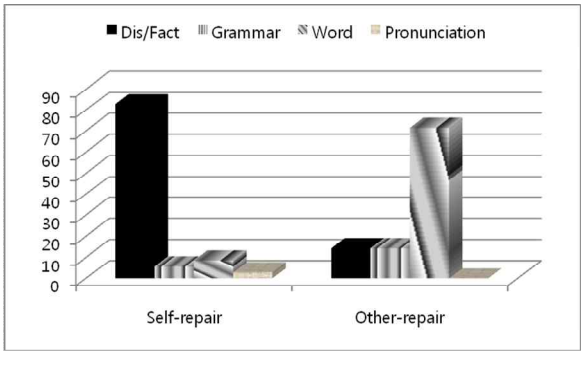
TABLE 6

Overall Distribution of Self-Repairs and Other-Repairs by Linguistic Features for Different-Proficiency NNS-NNS Dyad

	Self-repair				Other-repair			
	SI Same	OI Third	SI Third	Total	W/ SI	W/O SI	Total	Grand total
Dis/Fact	16	11	2	29 (82.86)	1	0	1 (14.29)	30 (71.43)
Grammar	2	0	0	2 (5.71)	0	1	1 (14.29)	3 (7.14)
Word	3	0	0	3 (8.57)	1	4	5 (71.42)	8 (19.05)
Pronun	0	1	0	1 (2.86)	0	0	0 (0.00)	1 (2.38)
Total	21	12	2	35 (100)	2	5	7 (100)	42 (100)

FIGURE 4

Overall Distribution of Self-Repairs and Other-Repairs by Linguistic Features for Different-Proficiency NNS-NNS Dyad



Regarding the NS-NNS dyad, although most of the self-repairs identified in this dyad were related to discourse or factual knowledge, four self-repairs were observed in each of the two categories, word choice and pronunciation (see Table 7 and Figure 5). All four word choice repairs occurred in the same-turn self-repair pattern, whereas all the pronunciation repairs were in the other-initiated self-repair pattern. Seven other-repairs on discourse or factual knowledge observed were made without self-initiation. Other-repairs occurred only in relation to trouble sources on discourse or factual knowledge.

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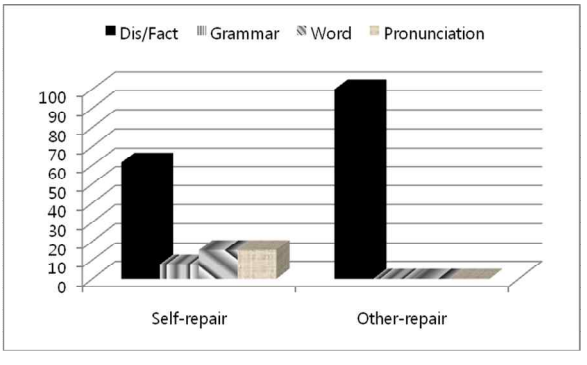
TABLE 7

Overall Distribution of Self-Repairs and Other-Repairs by Linguistic Features for NS-NNS Dyad

	Self-repair				Other-repair			
	SI Same	OI Third	SI Third	Total	W/ SI	W/O SI	Total	Grand total
Dis/Fact	10	6	0	16 (61.53)	3	7	10 (100)	26 (72.22)
Grammar	1	1	0	2 (7.69)	0	0	0 (0.00)	2 (5.56)
Word	4	0	0	4 (15.39)	0	0	0 (0.00)	4 (11.11)
Pronunciation	0	4	0	4 (15.39)	0	0	0 (0.00)	4 (11.11)
Total	15	11	0	26 (100)	3	7	10 (100)	36 (100)

FIGURE 5

Overall Distribution of Self-Repairs and Other-Repairs by Linguistic Features for NS-NNS Dyad



As seen above, it was evidenced in the current study that the frequency of occurrences of each linguistic feature categorized here differed depending upon the type of dyad. Four pronunciation repairs in the other-initiated self-repair pattern occurred in the NS-NNS discourse, whereas only one pronunciation repair in the other-initiated self-repair pattern was observed in the different-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad; none occurred in the same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad. Eight repairs on word choice occurred in the different-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad (three in the same-turn self-repair pattern, one in the self-initiated other-repair pattern, and four in the other-repair pattern without self-initiation). However, no other-repairs on word choice occurred in the NS-NNS dyad although 4 same-turn self-repairs were produced in the dyad. Furthermore, compared to the other two dyads

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in terms of repairs on grammar, much more grammar repairs were produced by the same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad.

IV. DISCUSSION

The findings have indicated that repairs patterns observed in the present study seem to fit into conversational repair patterns described by Schegloff's et al. (1977), rather than didactic and classroom-specific repair patterns illustrated in van Lier's (1988) work; although didactic repairs were also observed in such patterns as self-initiated other-repairs or just other-repairs without self-initiation, they rarely occurred. Also, it was confirmed that self-repairs were a far more preferred type of repair than other-repairs (e.g., Moerman, 1977; Schegloff et al, 1977). The study also suggested that proficiency may play a role in the distribution of repairs, especially in terms of the type of self-repair. That is, it was found that the smaller the difference between the participants in the dyad in terms of proficiency, the more instances of the same-turn self-repairs they produced. However, the larger the difference in their proficiency in a dyad was, the more repairs in the other-initiated self-repair pattern they produced; that is, the NS-NNS dyad produced a relatively larger number of other-initiated self-repairs, and a smaller number of same-turn self-repairs than the other NNS-NNS dyads (this is in terms of percentages). Conversely, the same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad produced more same-turn self-repairs and less other-initiated self-repairs than did the other two dyads. The current study also suggests that linguistic features included in repairs may differ in terms of frequency for each type of dyad; although there were only a small number of occurrences of repairs related to the categories other than the discourse/fact category, repairs on some categories occurred more often than the others in different dyads. In what follows, some issues related to the findings of this study are discussed.

The results suggest that not only the setting affects the patterns of repairs, but topics in combination with grouping may also affect the repair patterns that can occur during interaction. That is, didactic repairs (van Lier, 1988) can occur during everyday conversations depending upon the topic of conversation and who the participants are in the conversation. This was clearly evidenced in the same-proficiency NNS-NNS discourse. In the dyad, the rather simple but interesting topics used may have helped the NNS participants take full advantage of their content-schema built up on their previous experiences during the conversation and the fact that they knew each other well enough (they were taking the same class) may have made possible the occurrence of far more didactic repairs than in the other two dyads (i.e., more non-discourse/fact linguistic repairs in the same-proficiency dyad than in the other dyads; see Tables 5, 6, and 7). As they felt

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comfortable about each other, they may have become able to focus more on the conversational activity and considered it as another opportunity to practice English, as witnessed in a number of self-repairs made especially by one of the participants in the dyad. He made attempts to utilize what he had learned and tried to self-repair a number of trouble sources whenever he felt it was necessary while communicating with his partner, as in Excerpt 9 (also Excerpt 4 mentioned above as repeated here in Excerpt 10).

(9) Excerpt 9

1 NNS: *…They have a lot of bodyguards, I mean, and all of them guys and just except one, she was a girl. They started all drink food, they started all drink, drank champagne and red wine. Uh…the girl, I mean, fall felt in felt in love with the manager, and the head chef which who is the brother of the manager felt in love with the girl.*

(10) Excerpt 10

1 NNS2: *Yeah, you must go on Christmas. So…which country, let's talk about your, which country do you like in Europe?*
2 NNS1: *The country?*
3 NNS2: *Yeah, the country that you you have been visit, visiting, I mean, you have been you have visited and you like it in Europe, France.*

As regards to the role that proficiency plays, the study shows that if the difference in proficiency is larger, other-initiated repairs occur quite often. Obviously, it is likely that more proficient learners (or NSs) may utilize more complicated structures and rather low-frequency vocabulary, which makes less proficient learners have trouble comprehending what they hear. Also, less proficient learners may not produce comprehensible output (Swain, 1985, 1995, 2005), resulting in questions/other-initiations of repairs from more proficient learners (or NSs). Thus, it stands to reason that the larger the difference in proficiency between the interlocutors, the more frequently the other-initiations of repairs occur; sometimes a single trouble source results in multiple other-initiations and repairs as in Excerpt 11 below, which occurred in the NS-NNS discourse.

(11) Excerpt 11

1 NNS: *Did you, have you seen uh Spain fountain in Spain?*
2 NS: *The Spanish fountain?*
3 NNS: *Yeah, Spanish fountain, it's very famous.*
4 NS: *Umm What does it look like?* (chuckles)
5 NNS: *It's a big fountain.*

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6 NS: *The Trevi fountain in Rome?*
7 NNS: *I think.*

However, it may be assumed that the reverse is true regarding the frequent occurrence of same-turn self-repairs in the same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad. In addition to the benefits of the familiar topics and familiarity with each other, both learners of less proficiency made much more repairable utterances than those in the other two groups, therefore, more same-turn self-repairs were possible. Conversely, it is quite likely that more proficient learners make less trouble sources, which explains less same-turn self-repairs in this study; the less proficient learners in all three dyads were of the same proficiency, so the proficiency of their interlocutor in each dyad affected how frequently same-turn self-repairs occurred (the more proficient they are, the less same-turn self-repairs they produce).

Also observed in the data are some examples of embedded other-repairs by means of an alternate (Jefferson, 1987). This type of other-repair mainly occurred in relation to word choice in the present study. From the perspective of language learning, if this replacement is to facilitate learning, learners must notice this type of other-repair (Schimdt, 1990, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2001). However, this cognitive processing has been one of the hectic topics in language learning research and still remains complicated and controversial in relation to the implicit vs. explicit learning issue. Below is an example of this embedded other-repair.

(12) Excerpt 12

1 NNS1: *They don't stop some specific stations, even though they write the, write on the picture.*
2 NNS2: *Oh no, they skip?*
3 NNS1: *Yea, they skip.*

Another interesting phenomenon to note is that the learners of the same proficiency may step aside in the midst of conversation for self-initiations of repairs. One of the participants in the same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad did not fully comprehend the previously occurring discourse, returning to the question that she received from her partner. She asked herself by repeating the same question asked by her partner a few turns earlier (NNS1 in Excerpt 13). This rare instance of a step away from the conversation is additional evidence that the participants in the dyad may have regarded the activity as another learning opportunity. This did not occur in the other two dyads where the conversational activity may have been considered as a real conversation, more or less.

(13) Excerpt 13

1 NNS1: *It was so hot, the weather was so hot. I don't like it.*

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2 NNS2: *It was so hot? Where did you go exactly in LA?*
3 NNS1: *Las Vegas.*
4 NNS2: *Yea, Las Vegas? Las Vegas is not LA. Las Vegas is in Nevada.*
5 NNS1: *Oh yea yea yea. No no no.*
6 NNS2: *So you went to Las Vegas?*
7 NNS1: *Yeah.*
8 NNS2: *Wow,* [inaudible] *in the air two months ago?*
9 (Both chuckle)
10 NNS1: *Yeah, and no, Los Angeles, where did you go? Um… I don't remember the city name. It was good.*

With regard to the features of repairs, similar to the results of Chun et al.'s (1982) study in which far more errors on discourse and facts were found than on other linguistic features in the NS-NNS conversations, most of the repairs observed in the present study were in relation to discourse or factual knowledge in all three dyads. Only a few instances of repairs on grammar, word choice, and pronunciation were found in the data; it should be reiterated, however, that although instances of those non-discourse/fact linguistic categories were not enough to make any firm conclusions, the type of dyad may affect the patterns of repairs on different linguistic features as well as the frequency of repairs containing them. The paucity of repairs on those specific linguistic features is due, mainly, to the fact that the conversational activity that the participants carried out in the present study was a focus on meaning activity, not designed as a focus on form activity (Long, 1991, 2000; Long & Robinson, 1998); however, relatively more instances of focus on form (as reflected in the number of non-discourse/fact linguistic repairs) were observed in the same-proficiency NNS-NNS dyad, as compared to the number of focus on form instances that occurred in the other two dyads.

Although the present study provides some valuable insights into the organization of repairs and related variability of the frequency of linguistic features on which the type of dyad may have an impact, the results should be interpreted with extreme care due to the fact that only a small number of participants were involved, and that the data were collected only from three 15- or 16-minute conversations. More research on the issue of proficiency may provide a clearer picture of how repairs work in conversational interaction and in L2 classroom. Especially, considering the fact that individual variation in English proficiency is somewhat evident in most Korean EFL classrooms, it is essential that teachers take learner proficiency into account when grouping their learners for communicative activities.

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V. CONCLUSION

The present study, in an attempt to investigate the role of proficiency in the occurrence of repairs, explored how the type of dyad affected the organization of repairs and the distribution of linguistic features included in repairs. The findings indicate that overall repair patterns observed in the present study fit into Schegloff et al.'s (1977) conversational repair patterns, rather than van Lier's (1988) didactic/classroom-specific repair patterns that frequently occur in classroom settings. This study also suggests that proficiency may affect interlocutors' preferred repair patterns as well as the distribution of linguistic features involved in repairs. However, it should be noted that care must be taken in interpreting the present findings because the results of this small-scale explorative study were based on a limited amount of data collected from a small sample size. Nevertheless, more research on the role of proficiency in learner repairs during conversational interaction may contribute to a better understanding of the puzzle 'repairs' that we have made continuous efforts to solve.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels:Tertiary

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