'REPAIR' IN CHINESE AND AMERICAN ELT CLASSROOMS: A CONVERSATION ANALYSIS PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

There is no doubt that 'repair' plays a significant and indispensable role in second language learners' language learning process (Van Lier, 1988). The present study, by use of conversation analysis and online group discussion, investigated the 'repair' employed in both American and Chinese ELT classrooms. Interlocutors sometimes have difficulty in interpreting the other speaker's turn, or they may interpret his/her turns differently from what he/she actually means. To deal with such problematic cases where there are some troubles in speaking, hearing, or understanding the talk occur – repair organisation is needed (Kurhila, 2006). The research results in this study indicated that the repair did function differently in different contexts, and language teachers in American and Chinese ELT classrooms also have different preference in terms of repair strategies. Other-initiated self-repair was proved to be the most preferred kind of repair.

Keywords

ELT classroom interaction, repair strategies, conversation analysis, online group discussion

Introduction

The present study mainly examines the 'repair' work involved in American and Chinese ELT classrooms where language teachers and learners used from a CA perspective. The research focus of this study is guided by the following two questions: 1). In which way do both American teachers and Chinese teachers initiate the 'repair' as a pedagogical strategy to achieve their pedagogical focus? And is there any difference between both American and Chinese teachers' use of repair strategy? 2). Is there any preference or dis-preference of the specific kind of repair that ELT teachers and learners used to complete a 'repair' work in

American and Chinese classrooms? The database rested on real-time videos and an online group discussion among Chinese ELT teachers and will be analysed from a CA perspective.

ELT Classroom Interaction

Definitions and Features of ELT Classroom Interaction

Classroom interaction refers to the verbal exchanges between teachers and students and students themselves in classroom settings (Lo & Macaro, 2012). Ellis (1990) gave her definition of ELT classroom interaction that all communication referring to not only the exchange involved in authentic communication but also each oral exchange occurring in the classroom. ELT classroom interaction has been the focus of attention to researchers for more than fifty years (Walsh, 2011). Actually, what happens in the classroom largely determines the degree to which desired learning outcomes are realized (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). To be specific, ELT classroom interaction may operate in a number of 'L2 classroom contexts' (Seedhouse, 2001). Thus, as for the classroom interaction, the only purpose is to provide conditions for language learning (Malamah-Thomas, 1987). This perspective partly supports the statement by Tsui (1995) that the classroom language and interaction are vitally significant because language is the subject of studies, as well as the medium for learning. To stress the importance, Tsui (1995) also proved himself that students in ELT classrooms usually obey teachers' instructions, clarifications or explanations. Walsh (2006), on the other hand, developed the Self Evaluation Teacher Talk (SETT) that characterises the teacher-student interaction and then is used in a study of interaction strategies for ELT in lower secondary level of education in Indonesian (Suryati, 2015).

Later on, Seedhouse (2004) summarized and complemented that teachers and students actually co-construct both teaching and learning in situ, but instances of the co-construction might or might not be aligned with the intended pedagogical focus. Based on this, questions

may be initiated at this point towards how this 'co-construction' is not only recognized but also realized in ELT classrooms?

According to Ma (2015): many tasks are assigned to students by language instructors, which allows them to be engaged in the required and optional information exchange tasks either in dyads or in small groups. Students will have sufficient opportunities to interact with both language teachers and peers to know each other and express their thoughts. Thus, the interaction in the ELT classroom contexts could be considered as a means to facilitate students' language acquisition, students must check whether their comprehension is correct or not leading them to seek clarification. The classroom interaction does play a vitally significant role in L2 language learning, supporting that the most important way by which learners make the input comprehensible is the interactional adjustments (Ma, 2015).

Moreover, although the research focus in this study is viewed and evaluated from the CA perspective, there are actually several different perspectives on classroom interaction employed over the past 30 years. Such as: Discourse Analysis (Levinson, 1983; Chaudron, 1988), Communicative Approach (Johnson & Morrow, 1981; Christopher & Johnson, 1979), Observation (Montgmery & Montgmery, 2002; Wajnryb, 1992), Ethnography (Brewer, 2000; Seedhouse, 2007) and Coding Schemes (Üstünel, 2016).

'Repair' in ELT Classroom Interaction

It is commonly acknowledged that to share understandings is the goal and the expected state of affairs in conversation (Kurhila, 2006). However, interlocutors sometimes have difficulty in interpreting the other speaker's turn, or they may interpret his/her turns differently from what he/she actually means. To deal with such problematic cases where there are some troubles in speaking, hearing, or understanding the talk occur-repair organisation is needed (Kurhila , 2006). The repair mechanism makes it possible for the interactants to remedy the

breaches in intersubjectivity (Schegloff, et al., 1977). This repair mechanism is actually a 'self-righting' mechanism for the organization of language used in social integration and also plays an indispensable role in human interaction (Schegloff , et al., 1977).

Definition and Classification

The present study chose to define the 'repair' as 'the treatment of trouble occurring in interactive language use' according to Seedhouse (2004). Also, trouble is anything which the participants judge is impending their communicaton, and a repairable item is on which constitutes trouble for the participants (Seedhouse, 2004). Repair is of particular importance for L2 learners and teachers to be aware of how communication breakdowns or misunderstanding are repaired. In ELT classrooms contexts, once the trouble/repairable does arise, the repair could halt or stall the course of actions in order to address that problematic utterance.

Additionally, this study also based on 'repair trajectories' from Schegloff , et al. (1977), which classified repair into the following four trajectories: self-initiated self-repair, self-initiated other-repair, other-initiated self-repair and other-initiated other-repair. Generally speaking, these repair trajectories indicate whether the producer of the repairable item ('self') or somebody else ('other') initiates or completes the repair. And the distinctions among them are from a structural, organizational framework revolving 'self' and 'other': self-repair indicates that the repair is made by the speaker of the trouble source who initiates a problematic utterance or in need of the repair. Whereas other-repair is reserved for repair made by anyone but not the speaker of the troublesome utterance (Zahn, 1984).

'Repair' in Different Contexts

According to Seedhouse (2004), each L2 classroom context has its own peculiar organization of repair which is reflexively related to the pedagogical focus of the context. It could be summarized below briefly:

Form-and-accuracy Contexts	• Overwhelmingly initiated by the language teachers. • The focus of repair is on the production of specific sequence of linguistic forms. • Personal meaning does not enter into the picture.
Meaning-and-fluency Contexts	• Focusing on the expression of personal meaning rather than linguistic forms, on fluency rather than accuracy.
Task-Oriented Contexts	• Focusing on removing any trouble that hinders the learners' communication.

'Repair' in Chinese ELT Classrooms

Currently, studies focusing on 'repair' in Chinese ELT classroom contexts are very rare. Wang & Wu (2016) observed and analyzed the forms and functions of the conversation repair (trouble source, repair initiation, and repair outcome), and their study proved that the repair has a noticeable and apparent influence on the interactions between teachers and students and teaching functions in the class where Chinese is a foreign language. However, most researches rest on the exploration of 'Code-Switching' by bilinguals, which indicates that some trouble sources initiate the repair in understanding, expression or interaction especially in foreign language classroom conversation between learners' L1 and L2. Conversely, teachers and learners are proved to show no tendency to L1 or L2 (Wang & Wu, 2016). Instead, both of them prefer to switch to the appropriate language in sequence organization to make sure the class interaction could be smooth. In case of the repair, speakers alter the action in some significant way (Wang & Wu, 2016).

Strategies for conducting 'repair'

Seedhouse (2004) summarized and demonstrated eight strategies to conduct a 'repair' without performing an explicitly expressed unmitigated negative evaluation:

- *Strategy 1*: Use a next-turn repair initiator to indicate (indirectly) that there is an error which the learner should repair. *(Other-Initiated Self-Repair)*

- *Strategy 2:* Repeat the word or phrase of a word which the learner used immediately prior to the error; *(Other-Initiated Self-Repair)*

- *Strategy 3:* Repeat the original question or initiation; (*Other-Initiated Self-Repair*)

- *Strategy 4:* Repeat the learner's erroneous utterance with a rising intonation; (*Other-Initiated Self-Repair*)

- *Strategy 5:* Supply a correct version of the lingustic forms; (*Other-Initiated Other-Repair*)

- *Strategy 6:* Provide an explanation of why the answer is incorrect without explicitly stating that it is incorrect. (*Other-Initiated Other-Repair*)

- *Strategy 7:* Accept the incorrect forms and then supply the correct forms; (*Other-Initiated Other-Repair*)

- *Strategy 8:* Invite other learners to repair. (*Other-Initiated Other-Repair*).

Methodology

Research Database

The database rested on eight classroom real-time videos including five American classes and three Chinese classes. English is the L2 for all the students. To be specific, the American classes were from a published TEFL Official Website (DVD Set: English Language Teaching in Actions). The length of each video varied significantly, with a range of 5 minutes to 12 minutes. But, it should be mentioned that there is no given background information of both language teachers and learners in this DVD set.

Data of Chinese ones lasted longer than the American ones, each was around 45-50 minutes, and the age range of participants are from 12-18 years old who predominantly junior and senior high school students.

1). Conversation Analysis (CA)

It is demonstrated that the relationship between the observable actions and the context is unclear since the institutional reality consists of multiple layers of potentially relevant variables (Arminen, 2005) including gender, age, social status, institutional agenda, expert knowledge and the form of the organisation. However, CA has promoted a paradoxical solution to the problem due to the fact that it suspends the use of context as an immediate explanatory resource. CA aims to understand how social actions are accomplished and claims that no detail of the interaction can be dismissed as insignificant (Seedhouse & Jenks,2015).

In addition, the CA approach is also completely insistent on the use of recordings of the data as empirical basis for analysis (Heritage & Clayman, 2010). Thus, CA would be widely employed in the research which not only transcribes the collected data but also analyses the classroom interaction in terms of turn-taking, sequence, topic, repair and the preference organisation applying the Transcription Convention from Atkinson & Heritage (1984).

2). Online Group Discussion

This methodology is adopted for 33 Chinese ELT teachers through the 'Wechat' app. Each participant has an individual account to log in, and the three teachers in the Chinese classes' videos are in this group chat as well. Since some of them may not be very familiar with the concepts of 'repair' or 'CA' in the research, I send them a Word document before to offer a brief introduction and information towards research questions. When the group discussion starts, I will ask questions one by one. In the meantime, they may have problems or even suggestions towards the topic. Teachers are all worked in high schools, and the following questions were asked in the group discussion.

- In what way / which specific strategy you usually used to initiate a repair to your students?

  (*Note*: participants are all required to choose from the eight strategies mentioned before, they were also informed that this question is a multiple choice and the number of their choice is not limited)

- In relation to your personal teaching experience, which kind of repair is the most frequent one that occurred in your language class?

  (*Note*: Participants should choose from: self-initiated self-repair, self-initiated Other-Repair, Other-Initiated Self-Repair and Other-Initiated Other-Repair)

- Have you made any grammatical mistakes or incorrect linguistic forms in your class? If you haven't, have you ever seen anyone else making mistakes in their classes? How do you/they usually deal with this issue? By self-initiated self-repair or you may just ignore them?

DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

1). Teachers' Initiation of Repair as a Pedagogical Strategy in Chinese and American Classrooms

Considering that there will be a comparison between the American classes and Chinese classes and the different length of the two settings, analysis and discussion will be presented separately in this section.

First, I present the findings from the American classroom which contained 19 instances of repair. I overview instances of other-initiated repair and present and describe extracts from the data. To be specific, there are actually 9 times other-initiated self-repair, 9 times other-initiated other-repair, only 1-time self-initiated other-repair as shown below:

American Classrooms

Other-Initiated Self-Repair

     Other-Initiated Self-Repair is the most preferred type of repair among all the American teachers in my database, they use this kind of repair 16 times. Because of the constraint of space, 3 examples will be shown along with specific strategy that they apply for each example.

- *Strategy 1:* Use a next-turn repair initiator to indicate (indirectly) that there is an error which the learner should repair. (5 times)

Extract 4

11   *T: =So (Abduo), tell me what did you do yesterday?*

12   *L2: (0.1)*

13   *=Umm (.) Yesterday ↑, (.) I watch a movie.*

14   *T: Emm:: (0.1) How do you say something in the <u>past</u>?*

15   *(0.2)*

16   *L3: Watched.*

17   *T: =<u>Watched</u> a movie, very good.*

18   *L3:   [add the '-ed']*

19   *T: ED. Excellent.*

20   *=So I watched a movie.*

21   *(0.1)*

22   *L2: So yesterday, I watched a movie.*

23   *T: Excellent...*

     In this extract, L2 in line 12 and 13 asked their teachers the question in line 11 without using the past tense and is an incorrect sentence -- *'I watch a movie'*. The teacher identified this mistake and then used a next-turn repair initiator by asking L3 *'how do you say something in the past?'* indicating that there was an error that L2 should repair. This mistake was also recognized by L3 in line 16 and L3 just supplied a correct version of that linguistic form to tell L2 it should be *'watched'* and the teacher also gave an overt and direct positive evaluation

'Very good' in line 17. Finally, in line 22, L2 corrected his mistake by repeating the correct version and received the teacher's preference organisation *'Excellent'* in line 23.

- *Strategy 2:* Repeat the word or phrase of a word which the learner used immediately prior to the error (1 time)

Extract 5

100   L4: =and finally in (Angolush) (.) Angolush (0.1), it will be snow.

101   T: Uh-hah. It wi::ll?

102   LL: It will snow.

103 L4: [It will snow]

104   T: Good! Very good!

It is clear that L4 said the answer *'it will be snow'* in line 100, but it was treated as an incorrect linguistic form by the teacher repeating the part of his answer *'it will'* in line 101. Subsequently, L4 and other learners repaired immediately with their teacher's utterance simultaneously in line 102, 103, and they received teacher's positive evaluation *'good, very good'* indicating that the repair is admitted and completed.

- *Strategy 4:* repeat the learners' erroneous utterance with a rising intonation. (2 times)

Extract 6

36   T: (0.1) So, (Weichang), tell me what you did yesterday.

37   L4: I fixed (.) the *shower* (.) in the kitchen.

38   T: in the kitchen. (.) You fixed the shower (.) in the *kitchen* ↑?

39   L4: (.hhhhhh) Oh:: No:: (0.1) in the *bathroom*.

40   T: Oh:: in the bathroom.

41   =Ok, so what did you do yesterday?

42   L4: I fixed the shower (.) in (.) the bathroom.

43   T: Very good.

It is clear in the extract that L4 in line 37 answered the teacher's question in line 36 with quite a funny expression that she fixed the shower in the kitchen. This erroneous utterance repeated by the teacher in 38 with a rising intonation to confirm whether L4 actually fixed the shower in the kitchen. L4 recognized this error in line 39 and corrected it immediately by changing *'kitchen'* to *'bathroom'*. Subsequently, in order to make sure that L4 could avoid this kind of mistake again, the teacher asked the original question again in line 41 and L4 answered correctly this time.

Other-Initiated Other-Repair

- *Strategy 5:* Supply a correct version of the linguistic forms. (8 times)

Extract 7

129 T: =You want to be actually as specific as possible in your start date:

130   August 18th (.) 2008. It it's (.) the beginning of August ↑ or all of the

131   August, then just wri::te August 1st ↑, 2008.

132 LL: ((nod))

133   T: Ok?

134   (.)

135 LL: Yeah.

136   T: Very good.

For this specific example, the teacher just supplied the correct version directly of how to write the date in the target linguistic form. As it showed in line 129 to line 131, the teacher told the learners to provide the correct form. If we see at the video recording, we could notice that the teacher also wrote the correct form on the blackboard to help the learners get an explicit understanding.

- *Strategy 6:* Provide an explanation of why the answer is incorrect without explicitly stating that it is incorrect. (1 time)

Extract 8

3   T: Right ↑ (.) Did you ran fast or slowly?

4   L1: =Fastly

5   T: Fastly. (0.4) ((turn over and write 'fastly' on the blackboard))

6   'FAST' (.) does not take (.) the 'LY' (.) Only 'fast'.

7   L1:   [Oh, ok]

8   T: I ran fast.

9   L1: =I ran fast=

10   T: Very good.

It is obvious that L1 answered the teacher's question in line 3 with an incorrect linguistic form *'fastly'* in line 4, and then the teacher just supplied a correct version of that specific linguistic form *'fast'* and also with a short explanation by saying *'fast does not take the LY'* in line 6 indicating that L1 made a mistake. L1 understood and also accepted when the teacher chose to repeat the original initiation and then L1 just read after his teacher and got a positive evaluation 'very good' from the teacher in line 10 showing that the repair work at this point was done.

Self-Initiated Other-Repair

There are actually five times that both language teachers and learners using this kind of repair in the five recordings of American classes. However, in terms of the strategy that they initiate this kind of repair, it is not always the same. Here are the examples:

Extract 9

1 L1: Kim, I have a question (0.1) what is the difference between (0.1) 'I ate

2   at McDonald's or (.) 'I have eaten at McDonald's?'

3   T: =That's a very good question, Andorea (guess)

4   So (.) 'I ate at McDonald's (.) We can say:: that is (.) i::n the past tense.

5   ((Teacher write on the blackboard))

6   =or you can say here ((drawing the timeline))

7   (0.4)

8   'ate' (0.2) and this is what we:: are:: (.) now

9   (.)

10   So from this timeline, (.) you can see (.) that 'ate' (.) is in the past t

11   (.) is in the past tense. (.) It is a complete action (0.1) This person ate at

12   McDonald's (.) one time and that was gone. Ok? Any questions?

13 L1:   [Ok]

14 LL: =No

In Extract 9, L1 asked teacher Kim a question in line 1 at the very beginning of the class which was about the difference between the two sentences. The teacher provided a preference organisation of repair 'That's a very good question' in line 2 and then supplied a correct version of the linguistic forms from line 4 to line 12 confirming the students get a comprehensive understanding by asking them 'Any questions?' in line 12.

Chinese Classrooms

As for the Chinese classes, there are 26 instances of repair, of which 13 times of other-initiated self-repair, 9 times other-initiated other-repair and 6 times self-initiated self-repair. See examples:

Other-Initiated Self-Repair
- *Strategy 1:* Use a next-turn repair initiator to indicate (indirectly) that there is an error which the learner should repair. (3 times)

Extract 10

565   LL: [take], take bus an::d on foot.

566   T: (0.1) And walk.

567 LL: =And walk.

The repair in this extract is a method of nonevaluatory repair initiation (Seedhouse, 2004). In fact, the learner does not make any mistake in line 565 by saying 'on foot'. However,

'on foot' was not the target linguistic form as the teacher repaired in line 566 by replacing 'on foot' to 'walk'. And then LL identified this corrective feedback and changed his utterance by repeating his teacher's correction with 'and walk' in line 567. There was no preference organisation of repair here.

- *Strategy 2:* Repeat the word or phrase of a word which the learner use immediately prior to the error. (1 time)

Extract 11

68   T: =*Good, very good. Now, let's read <u>again</u>. (.) Seems like you are in a good mood.*

69   LL: =*Seems like you are in a good mood.*

70   T: *Ok, no::w (.) please (.) say the sentence ↑ (.) to your <u>desk-mates</u>.*

71   *(0.2)*

72   T: *Say the sentence (.) to your desk-mates.*

73   *(0.2)*

74   LL: *Seems like you are in a good mood.*

75   LL: *[Seems like you are in a good mood]*

76   T: =*Now, once again.*

77   LL: *Seems like you are in a good mood.*

78   LL: *[Seems like you are in a good mood]*

79   T: *(0.1) Ok, are you happy now ↑?*

80   LL: *Ye::s.*

In Extract 11, the whole class repeated the contracted form of 'seems like you are in a good mood' in line 69, 74, 75, 77, 78, and the teacher directed the speakership in line 56 with the instruction that 'Let's read again', and line 72 'Say the sentence to your desk-mate'. Thus, the practice was achieved by repeating the target sentence.

- *Strategy 3:* Repeat the original question or initiation. (8 times)

Extract 12

19   *L2: Than- Thank you, Dannie. (0.1) See you later.*

20   (0.2)

21   T: See you later ↑?

22   (0.3)

23   L1: =Goodbye.

24   T: =Good, please go back to your seat.

There was a dialogue between the L1 and L2, as we can see in Extract 12. L2 ended her speech with an utterance 'See you later' which was not responded by L1. The teacher then repeated L2's utterance in line 21 to L1 to indirectly indicate that there was a need to reply to her partner, and then L1 gave a response in line 23 which was also confirmed by the teacher with a positive evaluation 'good' in line 24.

- *Strategy 4:* Repeat the learner's erroneous utterance with a rising intonation. (1 time)

Extract 13

133 LL: =[sau:t] (incorrect pronunciation of the word 'sort')

134   T: [sau:t]↑. Now (.) [sɔ:t]↑.

135 LL: =Sort.

136   T: Sort ↑.

137 LL: Sort.

In line 133, LL provided an incorrect pronunciation of the target word 'sort' by pronouncing '[sau:t]'. The teacher repeated this pronunciation with a rising intonation in line 134, and then supplied the correct pronunciation '[sɔ:t]' in the same turn. Here, what should also be noted is that: From line 134 to line 137, the teacher also initiated a repetition about the pronunciation of this word to ensure that all students could produce the correct pronunciation.

Other-Initiated Other-Repair
- *Strategy 5:* Supply a correct version of the linguistic forms (8 times)

Extract 14

565   LL: [Take], take bus an::d on foot.

566   T: (0.1) And walk.

567   LL: =And walk.

In line 565, the learner provided his utterance with 'take bus and on foot', and the 'on foot' was subsequently repaired by his teacher changing 'on foot' to 'walk'. It was recognized by the learner in the following line 567 and the learner corrected himself.

- *Strategy 7:* Accept the incorrect forms and then supply the correct forms. (1time)

Extract 15

47   LL: =Moun::[tai:]

48   T: Moun::[tən]. Right. (0.2)...

In this Extract, LL in 47 made an incorrect pronunciation of the word 'mountain' by pronouncing it 'Moun[tai:]'. His teacher did not indicate his incorrect pronunciation directly, instead, the teacher just accepted this error and provided the correct pronunciation 'Moun[tən]' in line 48.

Self-Initiated Self-Repair

- Teacher's Self-Initiated Self-Repair (3 times)

Extract 16

171   T: (12.00) yes, (0.2) pick apples. (0.1) ok, pick apples, (0.5) ok, now.

172   ((pointing at L13)) ((L13 writes 'make apple pie' on the blackboard))

173   (14.00) Yes, pick – make apple (.) pi::e.

In this extract, the teacher in line 173 firstly supplied an incorrect word 'pick' and then repaired it immediately into 'make' with an abrupt cut-off in the same line.

Extract 17

29   T: *about it (.) Can you find out some ways t::o (.) change her – his*

30   *situ::ation?*

Similarly in this extract, if we look at the prior turn of this lesson, we could easily know that they were talking about Xiaodong's problem, and Xiaodong is a boy's name. The teacher in line 29 made a mistake by saying 'her' rather than 'his' with an abrupt cut-off. The teacher then corrected herself immediately in the same turn.

- Student's Self-Initiated Self-Repair *(3 times)*

Extract 18

57   *L3: (0.2) E::r (.) I think join in – join in some clubs e::r (0.2) just, it is –*

58   *it can help Xiaodong be more outgoing.*

L3 in line 57 attempted to produce a linguistic form of 'it can…' whereas he said 'it is' before an abrupt cut-off to repair himself.

Comparisons between American and Chinese Classrooms

Since the length and number of recorded classes vary differently in both American classes and Chinese class, it would be more rational and justified to show and compare this result in the following figures in percentages. Also, the online group discussion was only adopted for Chinese teachers, see Figure 3 as a supplementary specification.
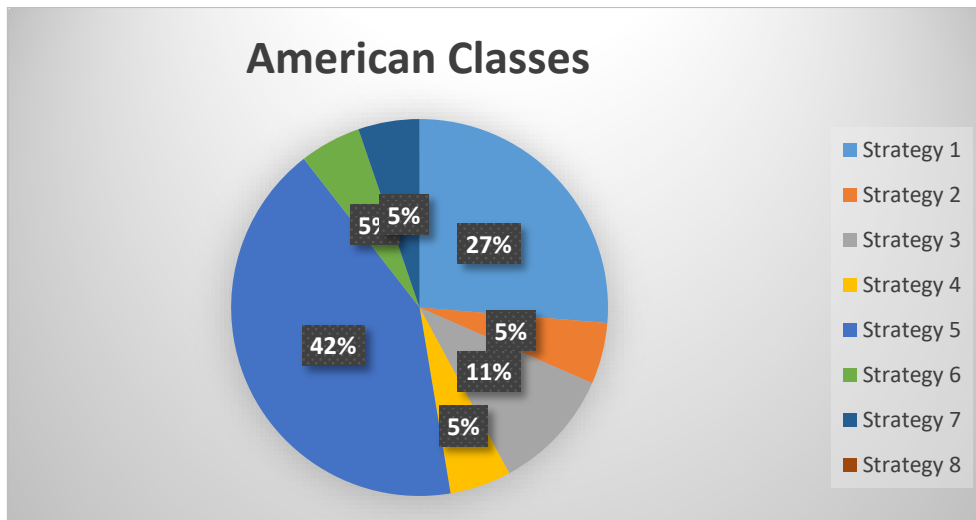
Figure 1

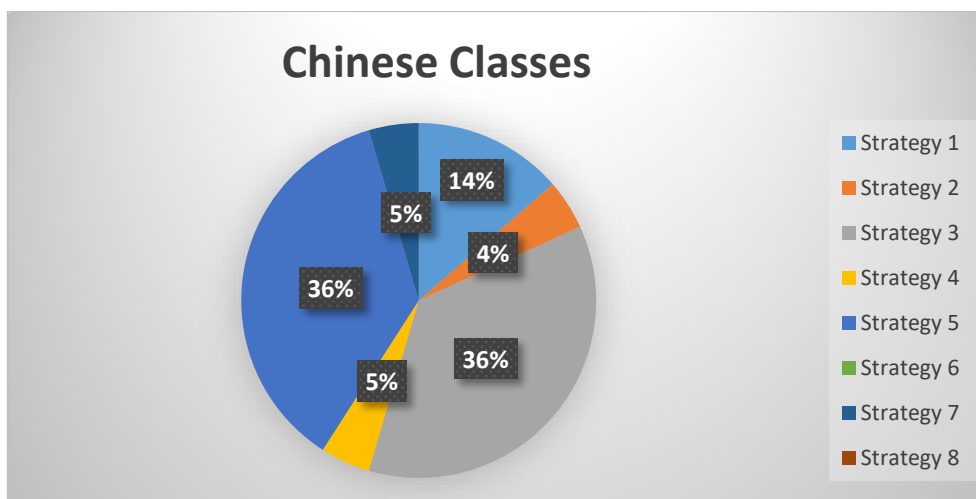*Proportion of Each Repair Strategy in American Classes*

Figure 2

Proportion of Each Repair Strategy in Chinese Classes

Surprisingly, the results of online group discussion with Chinese ELT teachers are totally different.
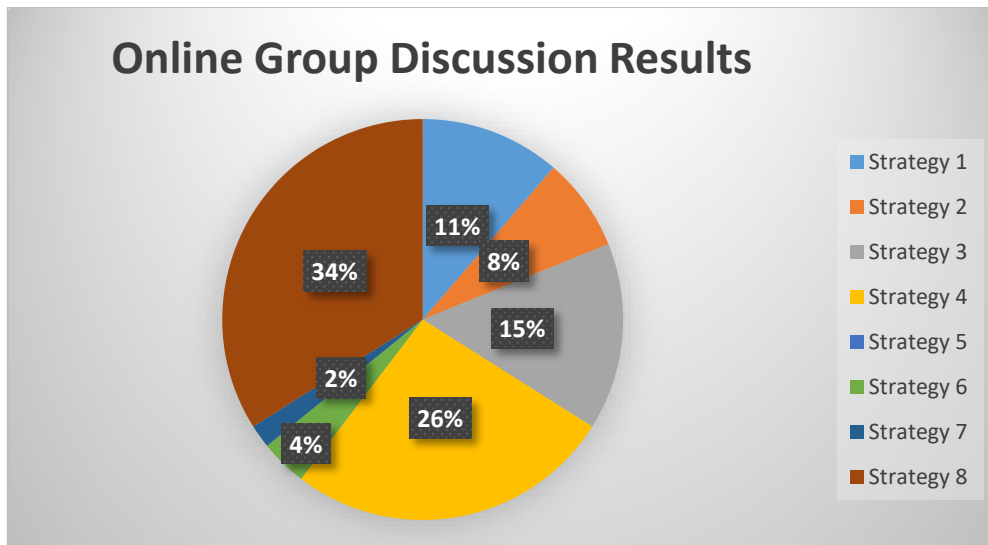
Figure 3

Online Group Discussion Results among Chinese ELT Teachers

Obviously, there is also a big difference between Chinese teachers and American teachers in terms of conducting a repair strategy. Based on Figure 1 & 2, it could be concluded that:

- American teachers in the database tend to use the *Strategy 1* (26%) & *Strategy 5* (42%) more frequently, whereas Chinese teachers prefer to apply the *Strategy 3* (36%) & *Strategy 5* (36%) more often. Thus, *Strategy 5* remains and presents the biggest portion, *Strategy 1, 3 & 5* are the top three strategies employed in both American and Chinese classes.

- 6% of American teachers employed *Strategy 6*, whereas none in the Chinese classes (0%).

- Neither American classes (0%) nor Chinese classes (0%) adopted the *Strategy 8.*

However, it is surprising to find that Chinese teachers in my video data and online group discussion also have different preferences to those eight strategies (especially towards the employment of Strategy 5 and Strategy 8) that they usually apply to repair their students' errors. Strategy 5 is widely applied by teachers in the video whereas no one in the discussion advocates

or prefers it. Strategy 8 is the most preferred and frequently used among teachers in the online group discussion and there is no evidence of this strategy used in the video data.

Data in *Figure 3* showed that:

- The most preferred and frequent strategy that Chinese online participants use is *Strategy 8* (34%).
- Teachers also tend to use the *Strategy 1* (11%), *Strategy 3* (15%) and *Strategy 4* (26%).
- There is no use or preference of *Strategy 5* (0%).

To sum up, not only the American teachers but also Chinese teachers tend to use different strategies to give corrective feedback in the classes. Even different Chinese teachers show a big distinction and preference to use different strategies. In order to explore the in-depth reasons of this difference, there is an extended question of this aspect during the online group discussion in terms of their attitudes about Strategy 5 and Strategy 8.

Based on the online group discussion, inviting other learners to repair student's errors could help students know the right answer clearly, improve students' engagement and confirm other's understanding, and ensure that all the learners could concentrate on the topic. Meanwhile, it may also encourage the students to help each other, make progress together and even build confidence in English learning especially for those who can help others repair.

According to the findings above, after the discussion towards this topic, I told the results of the Chinese video data especially the Strategy 5 to the online participants, since no one among them mentioned the Strategy 5 during the discussion.
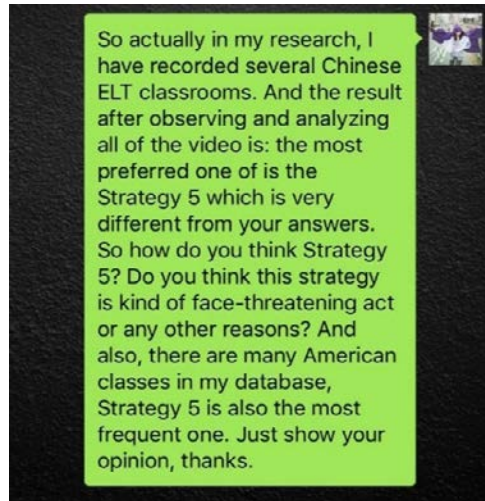
Figure 4

Online Group Discussion Chat History (1)

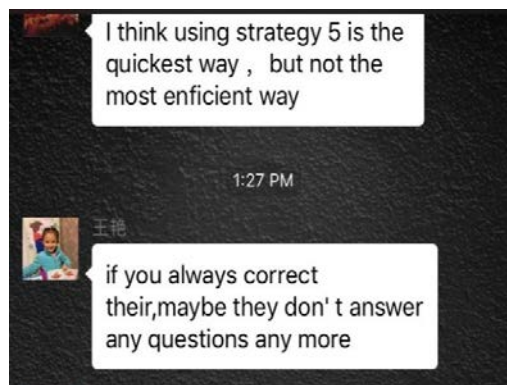Some teachers give their opinions and reasons for this different research results:

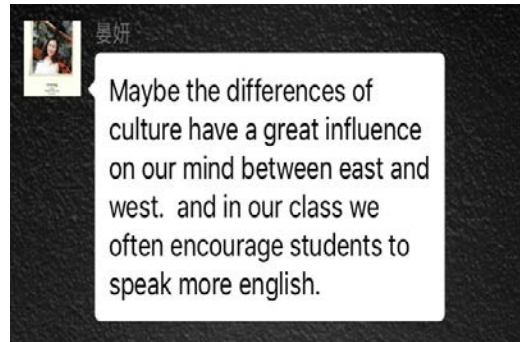*Figure 5*

Online Group Discussion Chat History (2)

Figure 6

Online Group Discussion Chat History (3)

Therefore, the differences between American and Chinese teachers do exist in terms of the specific strategies that they use to initiate a repair in classes in both transcription data and online group discussion. As there is no literature involving or even explaining this distinction, I believe this finding of my research could be extremely meaningful. As this research takes no consideration of other perspectives except CA, and there is no background influence of both American teachers and students, further researches would be more interesting and profound to find and add relevant information in this database.

2). Teachers' Preferences of Repair Techniques in American and Chinese Classrooms

Here, I compared and summarised the preferences and dis-preferences in terms of the specific kind of repair for both American and Chinese teachers along with the results of the online group discussion. See the following figures:

	American Teachers	Chinese Teachers
Self-Initiated Self-Repair	0	6
Self-Initiated Other-Repair	1	0
Other-Initiated Self-Repair	9	13
Other-Initiated Other-Repair	9	9

Table 1

American and Chinese Teachers' Different Preferences of Repair Techniques
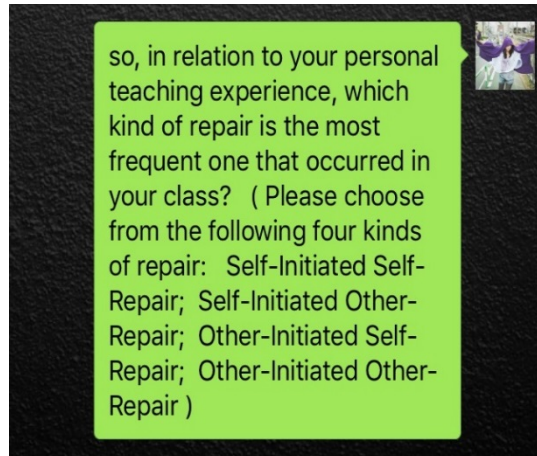
Figure 7

Online Group Discussion Chat History (4)
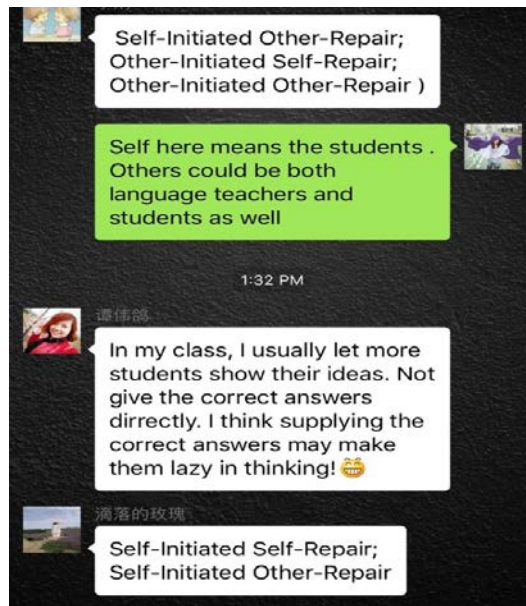

Figure 8

Online Group Discussion Chat History (5)

Figure 9

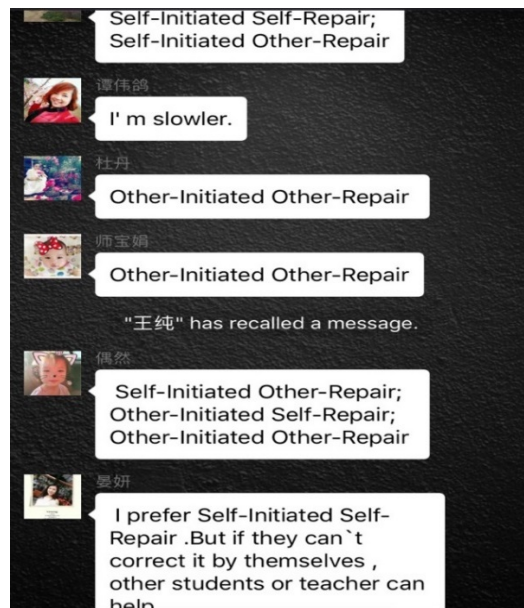***Online Group Discussion Chat History (6)***

Figure 10

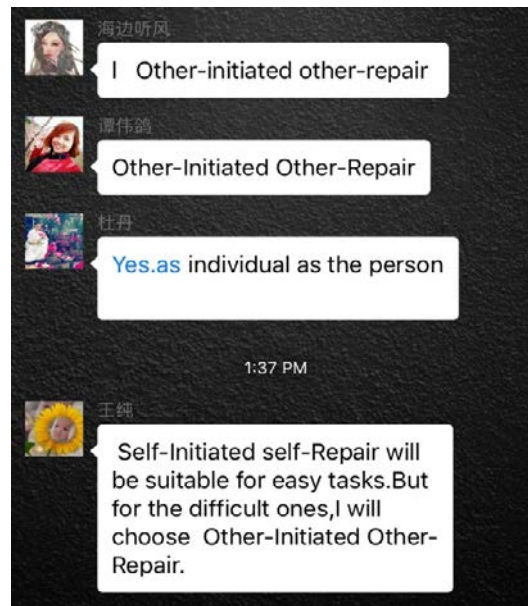***Online Group Discussion Chat History (7)***

Figure 11

Online Group Discussion Chat History (8)

According to Table 1, American teachers prefer to initiate other-initiated self-repair (9 times) and other-initiated other-repair (9 times) equally, which are also the top two employed by Chinese teachers to complete the repair work. But other-initiated self-repair seems to be the most preferable and frequent (13 times) compared with other-initiated other-repair (9 times) in Chinese classes. These results prove that other-initiated self-repair is the most frequent repair type in traditional classroom interaction (McHoul, 1990), and self-repair is preferred over other-repair (Schegloff , et al., 1977). Varonis & Gass (1985) also claimed that other-repair may be more frequent in interactions among 'not-yet-competent' speakers (Schegloff , et al., 1977). In relation to this research, both American and Chinese learners in the database are actually 'not-yet-competent' speakers in classroom interaction with the relatively low level of language competence. On the other hand, self-repair also gives language teachers and learners access to construct a turn to bring themselves to the interactional surface work (Wang & Wu, 2016).

Extract 19

45   L4: *It will be::* <u>*thunderstorm*</u>.

46   T: *(0.1) THERE*

47   LL: *=There will be thunderstorm.*

48   T: *Ok?*

49   LL: *There will be thunderstorm.*

50   T: *Thunder -* <u>*storms*</u>.

51   LL: *(.) Thunder<u>storms</u>.*

52   T: *Ah hah. (.) One more time.*

53   LL: *There will be:: (.)* <u>*thunderstorms*</u>.

54   T: *Good. Thunderstorms.*

In Extract 19, it is noticeable that L4, other learners and the teacher co-constructed a turn (Seedhouse, 2004) from line 45 to 54 with students' self-repair in line 47, 49, 51 and 53. Although it was initiated by the teacher in line 46 to supply the correct linguistic form ('there') or repeat the word 'thunderstorms' to check students' outcome in line 50 and 52. There is no doubt that it is these turn taking and sequence system and repair involved in this example that brings both teachers and students to organise the classroom interaction by themselves.

However, there is no evidence that American teachers apply self-initiated self-repair, which is 6 times in Chinese video data, and Chinese teachers show no use of self-initiated other-repair that American teachers employ only once. Among the 6 times of Chinese teachers' self-initiated self-repair, half of them are employed by the Chinese teachers and students' self-initiation of their own errors possesses the other half. This result just proves that although the pedagogical focus and the expected state of affairs in interaction is the shared understanding of the interlocutors (Kurhila, 2006). They may difficulty to interpret each other or by themselves, especially on condition that language learners are bound to produce inaccurate language forms (Pawlak, 2013). In terms of the 'repair' in Chinese ELT classrooms, the research result also confirms that the 'repair' does have a noticeable and apparent influence on the interaction

between teachers and students (Wang & Wu, 2016). I believe it is also true in the American classes since the level of language learners in both American and Chinese classes are relatively low. Moreover, in these contexts, the 'repair' does function as a strategy for the successful communication to correct the trouble source according to both teachers' and learners' personal needs (Wang & Wu, 2016).

Therefore, other-initiated self-repair is the most preferred kind of repair in both American and Chinese classes, whereas self-initiated other-repair is the least popular one. As there is no previous or any relevant literature or research towards the reason of the different preferences between Chinese and American teachers, this finding is extremely worthwhile for further studies.

DISCUSSION

At this point, it is very important to indicate that the research results summarized and examined are broadly consistent with previous studies and researches along with important findings in this area.

It was demonstrated that both Chinese and American teachers initiate various kinds and strategies of 'repair' in their classes to ensure language learners' accurate output from a CA perspective (Schegloff,et.al 1977; Seedhouse, 2001, 2004). Since detailed analysis and interpretation have been shown before, here, I'll focus on and stress some findings that are not or partially supported for the critical evaluation. For instance, both American and Chinese teachers prefer Other-Initiated Self-Repair which not consistent with Levinson (1983)'s assumption that the order of preference to the repair trajectories should be: self-initiated self-repair, self-initiated other-repair, other-initiated self-repair and other-initiated other-repair. The order in terms of both American and Chinese teachers' preference of repair is: other-initiated self-repair, other-initiated other-repair, self-initiated self-repair and self-initiated other-repair.

However, this result may not be that general and overall since in the language classrooms, it is the learner who determines whether the correct form is required, not the teacher (Tsui, 1987). Thus, it is hard to define or evaluate the question of 'what kind of repair is the most frequent and effective', and I agree with Pawlak (2013) that perhaps there will never be at this point.

In addition, another finding towards the specific strategies that American and Chinese teachers employed in the classrooms have no previous studies or researches to support. And since there is no background information of American participants, it is very hard to explain the reasons which I perceive as a big problem in this study. However, it is still clear and obvious that both American and Chinese teachers have developed a great variety of techniques to conduct or initiate the repair of language learners' utterances (Seedhouse, 2004).

More importantly, based on the above explanation and examination of the present study, I consider in more depth of the research findings to be extended in the following aspects along with further implications and recommendations.

- *Class Size is another factor influencing both the relationship between the organisation of interaction and pedagogical focus and the 'repair' in both American and Chinese classes*

In this study, the Chinese classes normally contain 40 to 50 students whereas approximately 5 to 10 students in the American classes. Based on the classroom observation and transcripts, American teachers do better than Chinese teachers in terms of organising the classroom interaction and initiating a 'repair', and they can always correct each student's mistake to ensure the whole class could produce the effective and comprehensible output. According to Ramana (2013), maintaining discipline, satisfying all needs of students of different interests, personalities and competence, organizing efficient class activities, providing equal chances for each student to participate and practice and giving the timely and effectively feedback and evaluation are the five main difficulties that language teachers in large classes

currently envisage, especially in the limited class time.   Therefore, Chinese teachers may encounter bigger challenges than American teachers. It is not easy for Chinese ELT teachers to organise the classroom interaction and the pedagogical focus needs adjusted at any time since they may not guarantee that they could actually get the expected outcome with so many students in such a large class. In other words, it is not possible for the teachers to nominate each student to answer questions or check their understanding, let alone repairing each student's mistakes.

However, some researchers have complemented this issue from another perspective that large classes could foster an atmosphere of cooperation, and also contribute to students' creativity and innovation (Ramana, 2013). Therefore, for further implications and development, teachers especially ELT teachers, should better take adaptive teaching strategies to cope with those problems and possess the advantages in the effective teaching and the practical classroom interaction. Moreover, previous study suggests that a model of seats in large classes will encourage the students who are good at English to be generous to help, and students who are weak in their L2 not to be shy to tell the difficulties to teachers or peers (Ramana, 2013). Based on this assumption, teachers could set their own model of students' seat and create a small class atmosphere in a large class setting. The participation could encourage students to interact freely with both teachers and peers. Another alternative divides the large class into small groups and plans participants with associated activities to promote language learning since creating a well-managed learning environment in large classes. I believe it will function very well especially in the Chinese large-class settings.

- *What is teachers' attitude to repair?*

In relation to the 'repair', both American and Chinese teachers in this study employ a great variety of repair strategies to repair incorrect linguistic forms or errors that hinder the classroom communication. Chinese online participants also express views of language teacher

in making grammatical mistakes, and it is commonly acknowledged that repairing students' errors is their primary work. Additionally, Chinese teachers in the video and online group discussion even share different understandings in terms of Strategy 5 (supply a correct version of the linguistic forms). All evidence and findings drive me curious about teachers' attitude to repairing their language learners.

Previously, Seedhouse (2001) discussed learners' attitudes to error correction and rested his findings on research evidence that learners want teachers to repair errors in fact, which is not an embarrassing matter within the interactional organisation of L2 classrooms. By contrast, teachers and methodologists seem to persist in treating linguistic errors as face-threatening and problematic on an interactional level (Seedhouse, 2001). In order to develop this single interpretation, this study will view the issue from another perspective towards teachers' attitude to repair in ELT classrooms.

Most studies focus on the importance of the feedback, ways to provide and receive the feedback, and the issue that the preferences and attitudes of both language learners and teachers towards error correction are neglected (Katayama, 2007). According to the recent literature, both students and teachers' assumptions towards the most effective methods to correct errors play a very significant role in second language learning (Chenoweth, et al., 1983). Language teachers and students share such common views of the importance of error correction and the types of errors which need repairing, and considerable discrepancies do exist as to the techniques of repair (Lee, 2005; Wang, 2010). For example, students prefer the overall correction while teachers do not (Hamouda, 2011). Teachers' attitudes are also of paramount importance in their language teaching process. In fact, raising teachers' awareness of repair could enable them to be more effective in career since it is very crucial to find out the ways through which students prefer to be corrected (Hamouda, 2011).

A previous study by Nunan (1988) pointed out that teachers give a 'low' rating of 'error correction' but a 'high' rating on 'student self-discovery of errors' which is a dramatic mismatching with learners' attitudes in the Australian Adult Migrant Education Program. Chenoweth, et al. (1983) also showed their research evidence that learners want their teachers to conduct Other-Initiated Other-Repair on their language errors whereas teachers tend to prefer other-initiated self-repair. Evidence from the database of the present study has reached a consensus that other-initiated self-repair is the most preferred and frequent kind of repair that both American and Chinese ELT teachers employ in their classrooms. Additionally, this study also discovers that neither American teachers nor Chinese teachers tend to apply other-initiated other-repair, which is described as 'heavily dispreferred and unwelcome in real-world conversation' and even suggested to avoid in ELT classrooms (Seedhouse, 2001).

Thus, it is the language teachers' responsibility to help learners with their difficulties to finally produce the target linguistic form or achieve the pedagogical focus, which may suggest that it could be better if language teachers comply with the students' attitudes when initiating a repair. Researches towards students' attitude of repair show that students do not like to be repaired or get the feedback at the very early stage since they may be discouraged from attempting to 'brainstorming' (Hamouda, 2011). For further recommendations, teachers who used to repair students' errors at the very beginning of the class need to give enormous support to students instead of being 'inferrable'. In other words, although different teachers may have different attitudes towards the 'error correction', it seems more important to decide 'when to repair' than 'how to repair'.

CONCLUSION

As expected, both American and Chinese teachers have their preference of repair strategies, similarities exist especially in terms of Strategy 5. Other-initiated self-repair is the most preferred kind of repair for both American and Chinese teachers. Surprisingly, the

research results of Chinese online participants are different in terms of the specific strategy used in their classrooms, reasons and further recommendations for each aspect are given before.

Limitations of this study revolve sampling issues and measurement and the generalizability of the results as well since there is no background information of the American teachers, which may make the comparison results between American and Chinese classes not representative. More importantly, there is a big difference between recordings in terms of length. On the other hand, for further development, the comparison between American and Chinese classes in terms of specific kind of repair in different contexts could be explored to take deep insights of the research focus. However, it is on condition that efficient background information or any other related information provided with the database.

To sum up, although the main interest of applied linguistic research is currently in the language product not in the language teaching process itself (Krumm, 1981), in spite of the limitations and the relatively compromised discussions, there is no doubt that the present study is very meaningful and deserve further study. The 'repair' in ELT classrooms will always remain significant and unchanged role in both language learning and teaching processes, especially on condition that English is right now the global language of communication (Education Bureau, 2009), improving the nation's competence in English could also afford with greater economic and financial prospects. Therefore, although there is no existing research towards the differences between the American and Chinese ELT settings in terms of classroom interaction and 'repair' from the CA perspective, I believe this study could make a contribution in this area for further studies. It could also benefit both American and Chinese ELT teachers learn from each other for further improvements.

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