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The Role of Other-repair in English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) Communications

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ABSTRACT

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The present paper aims to explore other-repair strategies in ELF communication and to identify sequential features and patterns of other-repair practices used to initiate the negotiation of meaning. The data are based on naturally occurring ELF conversations among the international students at a university in the U.K., and Conversation Analysis (CA) approach was adopted to identify and analyse mechanisms of other-repair strategies in the data. The findings suggest that ELF speakers engage in diverse clarification and repair strategies to clarify unclear messages of the others' talk and to offer elaboration and support in co-construction of meanings. The participants are found to employ other-repair strategies of lexical replacement, interpretive summarising, and lexical supporting. The ELF speakers in the data display and confirm their own understanding to the others by replacing and modifying troublesome items for explicitness and attempt to resolve ambiguity and uncertainty to achieve mutual understanding. Repair is not limited to rectify linguistic perturbation, but it is extended to comprehensible clarity and explicitness in a broader sense. The result of the study supports that ELF speakers do not take understanding for granted, but they work hard to achieve it by pre-empting understanding troubles before the occurrence and promoting explicitness.

KEYWORDS

1. Introduction

In intercultural communications such as English as a lingua franca (ELF), speakers attempt to overcome lingua-cultural diversity and unpredictability and enhance clarity for mutual understanding. Although it is crucial to instantly understand the other speaker's utterance and provide appropriate responses to each other, it is also important to adeptly cope with communicative situations when something wrong occurs in understanding processes. Other-repair is an efficient means to identify and resolve understanding troubles and to achieve mutual understanding (Mauranen 2006). Repair is referred to as "practices dealing with problems or troubles in speaking, hearing, and understanding the talk in conversation" (Schegloff 2000: 207). Seedlhouse (2004) describes repair as "the treatment of trouble occurring in interactive language use" (p. 34). Repair is divided into two different mechanisms according to who initiates the repair and who performs the repair acts. The first category involves self-initiated repair, where a problem is indicated by the trouble source speaker, and other-initiated repair, where a problem is indicated by other participants in conversation. The second category includes self-repair, which is made by the trouble source speaker, and other-repair, where a problem is solved by the recipient (Amin 2019: 246). This article is focused on the other-initiated other-repair, and briefly the term *other-repair* will be used to replace the other-initiated other-repair henceforth.

The forms of other-repair can be classified along a continuum from "weaker" (i.e., showing least grasp of the trouble source turn) to "stronger" (i.e., claiming a virtually adequate understanding, subject to confirmation) repair action (Kitzinger 2013: 249). The variation of other-repair strategies includes open class forms (e.g., *Pardon?, Sorry?, Excuse me?*, or *Huh?*) which show no grasp of the prior turn, category-specific interrogatives (*What?, Who?*, *Where?*, or *When?*), partial or full repeats of the trouble source in the prior turn, and candidate understandings, which alter or transform the trouble source in different ways. The organisation of other-repair involves repair initiation and repair solution, which form a side sequence. The other speaker initiates a sequence of repair by indicating problems in prior talk, e.g., the repeating request or spelling out some details of trouble sources, and provides a relevant repair solution by employing a range of linguistics resources and pragmatic strategies. Once the solution is accepted, the repair sequence is closed, and the main sequence can be followed again. As two or more parties contribute to the construction of sequences of repair initiation and solution, other-repair is a collaborative behaviour that indicates how speakers work together to achieve mutual understanding in social interaction (Schegloff 2000). As Dingemanse and Enfield (2015) point out, other-repair shows "asymmetries in knowledge states that cannot be navigated without a high degree of social intelligence and sensitivity" (p. 97), and therefore it acts as a sign of active listenership and a mechanism for negotiating shared understanding.

In communications, the understanding of a prior turn at talk is neither taken for granted nor recognised by the original speaker without an overt and explicit signal of comprehension. Therefore, when troubles occur in understanding others' turn, speakers need to employ a range of communicative strategies to signal troubles and confirm their comprehensions in more explicit ways. Other-repair is a salient system of interactive practices that participants employ to deal with recurrent problems in understanding the others' talk. It is commonly assumed that ELF communication is "particularly susceptible to misunderstanding" due to a lack of speakers' linguistic competence, shared repertoires, and intersubjectivity (Mauranen 2006: 123). However, numerous research findings show that misunderstanding occurs less frequently than assumed because ELF speakers anticipate and pre-empt potential misunderstanding and engage in diverse clarification and repair strategies (Cogo and Dewey 2012, Cogo and Pitzl 2016, Kaur 2020, Pietikäinen 2018). While self-repair has been relatively well researched, there have been few attempts to provide empirical studies on other-repair practice in ELF contexts. Therefore, the present paper aims to investigate the system of other-repair in ELF communication and to identify sequential features of

other-repair practices. Although the trouble sources are often identified and signalled by using direct questions (e.g., the use of interrogative words such as *what* or *who*?) or request for clarification, the paper focuses on the other-repair strategies used to confirm received understanding and initiate the negotiation of meaning.

2. Literature Review

2.1 How to Deal with Troubles in Understanding

The speakers' major concern in interaction is to convey their message effectively and understand the other's intended meaning. The process of mutual understanding entails that participants display to each other their understanding and interpretation of the other's talk and move forwards the next sequentially relevant procedure. As Svennevig (2004) points out, "such public displays of construals are manifested in the reactive aspects of the next turn", and signalling the interlocutor's understanding "provides the original speaker with the opportunity to inspect how he or she has been understood, and subsequently to validate or correct the construal in the third position of the sequence" (p. 491). Speakers attempt to avoid troubles of understanding and confirm their interpretation by using pre-empting and repair strategies. When speakers form different linguistic and sociocultural backgrounds communicate each other, it is generally anticipated that misunderstanding frequently occurs. However, empirical ELF research has demonstrated that misunderstanding is less common in ELF than expected since ELF speakers collaborate and accommodate each other and adeptly employ a range of direct requests for clarification and offering confirmation checks (Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey 2011). Once speakers detect potential troubles in understanding, they draw diverse explicitness strategies to overcome miscommunication and facilitate shared understanding.

Misunderstanding is "a form of understanding which is partially or totally deviant from what the speaker intended to communicate" (Weigand 1999: 769). Misunderstanding can occur on diverse linguistic and paralinguistic areas including "content, frame, intention, and mode of the utterance" as well as "mispronunciations mishearings, ambiguity, knowledge problems, topic organisation and focus difficulties" (Pietikäinen 2018: 189). Kaur (2011) classifies the main sources of misunderstanding in ELF into four categories: performance-related misunderstanding, language-related misunderstanding, ambiguity, and gaps in world knowledge. Performance-related misunderstanding is involved in performance problems such as unintelligible pronunciation or accent, faulty hearing and the tongue slips. Language-related misunderstanding is attributed to lack of competence in language or disfluencies such as non-standard use of lexical items and ungrammatical structures of sentences. Ambiguity, which is a main cause of misunderstanding in Kaur's data, is resulted from lack of explicitness in utterance, where "the recipient is often left to infer meaning and frequently may draw the wrong inference and misunderstand the speaker's utterance" (Kaur 2011: 105). Given that misunderstanding occurs when the interlocutor's interpretation is not equated to the speaker's intended meaning, ambiguity can often lead to an interpretive error. Gaps in interlocutors' knowledge of the world is another common factor of misunderstanding. This case of misunderstanding is related to content rather than linguistic knowledge. When speakers may lack common knowledge of a topic in conversation, it is difficult to understand the meaning despite linguistic competence.

As far as other-repair is concerned, the process of understanding and misunderstanding begins with the notion of "hunch", which refers to partial or incomplete understanding (Pietikäinen 2018: 189). When a speaker produces a turn, an interlocutor makes an interpretation of the speaker's utterance. The interlocutor may move forwards to

either accepting his/ her interpretation or questioning the hunch. If the interpretation is correct, understanding is achieved. On the other hand, if the accepted interpretation is deviant from the original speaker's intended meaning, misunderstanding occurs. When the interlocutor questions his/her incomplete understanding, he/ she can overtly produce a request for clarification and confirmation. For instance, the interlocutor may use repetition, direct clarification questions (e.g., '*what*?' or '*what do you mean*?') or minimal incomprehension signals (e.g., '*huh*?') to request more explanation and additional information and to resolve understanding problems. The interlocutor can also ask the original speaker to confirm whether the utterance he/ she heard or understood is correct or not (e.g., '*do you mean…*?', '*you mean …*' or '*you said …*'). In other cases, the interlocutor may use the strategy of interpretive summary by paraphrasing the speaker's message to check whether he/ she understood it correctly or not.

The organisation of repair actions comprises two major parts: repair initiation and repair outcome. In other words, the sequential organisation of other-repair begins with the presence of trouble source in the original speaker's turn, which will provoke the other speaker's production of repair initiation. Repair initiation is the practice of indicating or targeting trouble source, which "marks possible disjunctions with the immediately preceding talk" (Amin 2019: 247). Repair initiation is followed by repair outcome, which is the resolution of the trouble source or elimination of the problem, performed either by the trouble source speaker or the interlocutor. Meanwhile, Varonis and Gass (1985) explicate the process of other-repair with the notion of negotiation of understanding, whose sequences comprise the stages of a trigger, an indicator, a response, and an optional reaction. While the trigger occurs in the initial turn, the indicator happens in the following turn, where an interlocutor provides hints on the cause of the understanding problem. The indicator plays a main role in the negotiation and repair process since the trouble -source speaker cannot be aware of the problem when the repair turn is delayed or withdrawn. Most of the indicator is located immediately after the trouble-source turn, and signalling understanding troubles ranges from implicit, indirect, and unspecific, such as overriding or lack of uptake, to more explicit, direct, and specific such as metalinguistic queries and direct comments. The need for signalling and confirming understanding is clear because "a hearer who has already misunderstood a speaker's utterance presumes that he/she has understood it correctly and will react in accordance with this false interpretation-not in the way that the speaker had anticipated" (Pietikäinen 2018: 189).

2.2 Other-repair in ELF Research

Although other-repair is under-researched in ELF settings comparing to self-repair strategies, the pragmatic strategies for clarification of the others' utterance and achievement of mutual understanding have been foregrounded in ELF communications. For instance, in Kaur's (2020) study, which examined how other-repair operates in ELF group discussions among postgraduate students, the participants repaired others' utterance when the production of lexical items was inaccurate and imprecise. The speakers were found to replace a word which may distort the original meaning and trigger misunderstanding, they initiate or perform other-repair. The findings reveal that while the repair work mostly occurs without a gap or delay, in some cases the interlocutor may disrupt the speaker's on-going turn to modify the inaccurate choice of words. The speakers may pay attention to a higher degree of accuracy and orient to the precision in conveying meanings since the accurate lexical choice and delivery of clear message are salient in the academic discussion. In other words, the academic setting and the goal of task completion might force the speakers to perform an overt and frequent use of other correction. Therefore, the participants use other-repair "as a means of to get things right" as they work together to complete their tasks and accomplish assigned goals (p. 9).

Hanusková (2019) also corroborates that other-repair frequently occurs in academic talk and argues that overt misunderstanding in ELF interaction, particularly ELF in academic settings, is less common than in NS conversations because ELF communication is cooperative, mutually supportive, and consensus-oriented in nature. Other-repair is observed as one of the commonly used strategies that allows ELF speakers to achieve mutual comprehension and effective communication. The cases of other-repair is classified into the sorts of trouble source, which include hearing, understanding, or acceptability, and the methods of problem solving. Acceptability is engaged in both linguistic troubles and logic in contents, which is concerned with "saying something wrong in a wide sense, that is, untrue, inappropriate, or irrelevant" (Hanusková 2019: 39). In the analysis, the formats of other-repair are classified into three categories, which are unspecific problem indicators, category specific indicators, and candidate solutions, according to the degrees of specificity of the repair initiation in indicating the trouble source. In terms of the distribution of other-repair strategies, out of 37 cases of other-repair, the frequency of understanding problems (19 cases) outnumbered hearing (8 cases) or acceptability problems (10 cases). As for how specific the indications of trouble sources are, candidate solutions are the most frequent strategies to resolve trouble sources. In other words, the participants are found to use partial or full repeat for understanding check (*you mean + paraphrase*) or candidate correction (*you mean + correction*). As academic settings are involved in complicated high-stakes, where speakers attempt to cope with a variety of pragmatic, contextual, and discourse issues such as linguistic proficiency, cultural diversity, or institutional communicative goals, ELF speakers in academic settings tend to prioritise clarity and explicitness, and consequently other-repair strategies are commonly used to check unclear messages and minimise misunderstanding.

However, the occurrence of other-repair is more clearly observed in professional contexts of spoken discourse. For instance, Tsuchiya and Handford (2014) surveyed the use of other-repair in multiparty conversations of professional ELF meetings and revealed that the participants did not let the conversations pass when meaning was not clear but showed the active use of other-repair and other-reformulation. One interesting finding is that the speakers' backgrounds of organisation and profession are more prominent contextual factors than nationalities to distinguish the repair patterns and behaviours. The pragmatic feature of other-repair in the data is more transactional than interactional in nature to clarify the preceding utterances. The participants tend to repair others to resolve intelligibility and understanding problems rather than pragmatic acceptability, and repair actions more focus on the content of message and "clarity of meaning over interpersonal comity" (p. 119). Mutual understanding is remarkably crucial in communication because the ELF meeting is involved in a large construction project and comprises members of different institutional groups, professionals, and nationalities, and therefore the key issue is the achievement of clarity and explicitness for a decision-making process. While the speakers discuss issues and exchange opinions, they continue to monitor, question, and clarify others' utterance to minimise confusion and enhance mutual comprehension. Other-repair through reformulation may serve to decrease inter-group and interpersonal distance by expressing active listenership and creating a more cooperative mode in the meeting.

ELF speakers are found to employ other-repair strategies both after and before trouble sources. For example, Cogo and Dewey (2012) show that ELF speakers make an overt effort to deal with trouble sources by using both a post-source strategy and a pre-realisation strategy. While the first strategy is used after the trouble source, the latter is employed before the actual problem occurs. When overlapping talk causes the mishearing of interlocutors, they overtly indicate potential troubles of understanding by using different repair strategies including incomprehension signals (e.g., *mhm*), repetition of problematic items, or direct clarification queries. In some cases, simple repetition by a trouble source speaker is enough to resolve problems, while further clarification is required to make sure a full repair of understanding troubles. Therefore, reformulation or re-structuring of utterance is used to enhance explicitness and negotiate meanings. On the other hands, pre-realisations are involved in pre-empting

moves to avoid potential understanding troubles and clarify meanings. Although there are no actual understanding troubles or communication breakdown, interlocutors confirm their understanding of the original speaker's turn and enhance mutual understanding by employing "reformulation, wait-and-see, translation and contextualising strategies" (p. 135). The data show that ELF speakers are adeptly and proactively involved in co-construction and negotiation of meaning through repairing others.

While trouble sources in speaking and hearing mainly engage in phonological aspects of discourse such as pronunciation or accent, lexical elements in language production play a major role in mutual understanding. To explore how other-repair actions operate for meaning-focused understanding in ELF, where meaning is foregrounded over form, the present paper will focus on lexical other-repair rather than phonological or syntactical repair actions. By identifying the key patterns, features, and reactions of other-repair practice in ELF interactions, the paper will investigate how understanding troubles are negotiated and resolved in the context of intercultural communication through ELF. The research questions are as follows:

1) What kinds of sequential environments trigger other-repair in communication?
2) What types of other-repair strategies do ELF speakers use to identify and rectify trouble sources for mutual understanding?

3. Methodology

3.1 Data Collection and Participants

The data of the present study were based on 12-hour-long spoken ELF communications which were collected in the academic settings at a university in the U.K. The data are involved in naturally occurring informal ELF interactions among the international students from different linguacultural backgrounds. To recruit participants, the researcher circulated an email to the members of the international students' social club at the university, and 10 students replied to the email and accepted the participation of the research. The data collection took placed for the four-week-period of time, and the researcher asked the participants to audio-record their own conversations. Each conversation event consists of two to four participants and lasts approximately 60 minutes to 90 minutes. As the data are based on the naturally occurring conversations, the topics of the communications were not deliberately elicited by the researcher but free-flowing and naturally emerging during the interactions. Given that the focus of the present study is the other-repair actions in ELF communications, it is crucial to observe the kinds of conversations where power asymmetries among participants are less visible in terms of social relations, linguistic competence, and disciplinary knowledge. Therefore, among any possible academic-conversation-contexts in participants' relations, peer group conversations among all international students seem to be more appropriate and context-relevant to explore the dynamic and self-motivated features of other-repair practices in ELF than the other interactional contexts such as professor-students, native-non-native speakers, and examiner-examinees, where the instances of linguistic repair can be unparalleled and unilateral between each party in conversations.

The linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the participants consist of Korean, Chinese, Thai, and Japanese, and their disciplinary domains include linguistic, education, management, finance, hotel management, tourism, and computer science. Three students are undergraduates while the others are postgraduates. Although the lengths of the students' stay in the U.K. vary from 4 months to 5 years, and their proficiencies in English communication may differ among the participants, they all use English both for everyday conversations and for formal academic

purposes. This suggests that the participants are regularly engaged in meaningful ELF communications. In addition, since all the participants were required a minimum score of 6. 0 in IELTS for the entry of the academic programs, they possess an advanced level of linguistic proficiency in spoken English. Given a variety of lingua-cultural backgrounds, linguistic repertoires and resources, and socio-cultural experiences among participants, diversity is a common and typical feature to characterise ELF (Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey 2011). Therefore, variability of linguistic levels and competence of the participants is also very natural and common in ELF. However, linguistic neutrality is also observable and noticeable in ELF, which has no dominating party for interruption and correction in conversation to create asymmetric and unequal encounters. ELF speakers are found to have an equal level of membership and ownership of English when they communication in ELF interactions, which are "neutral settings where nativeness would not necessarily create a power asymmetry" because "the communicative purpose and appropriateness override over correctness" (Björkman 2017: 130). Consequently, there is absence of a controlling or dominant party for linguistic repair in ELF conversation, particularly peer group ELF interactions without power asymmetries as in the present study.

Table1. The Profile of Participants

speaker	sex	age	L1	Course level	Course name	Length of study in the UK	IELTS sore
1	Female	29	Korean	PhD	Linguistics	5 years	7.5
2	Male	30	Korean	BA	Hotel Management	3 years	7.0
3	Female	31	Korean	MA	Tourism	4 years	7.0
4	Male	27	Chinese	MA	Computer Science	6 months	6.5
5	Female	22	Chinese	BA	Management	4 months	6.0
6	Female	22	Chinese	BA	Finance	4 months	6.0
7	Female	25	Japanese	MA	Management	1 year	6.5
8	Male	29	Thai	PhD	Management	3 years	7.0
9	Male	28	Thai	PhD	Education	1 year	7.0
10	Male	28	Thai	PhD	Education	1 year	7.0

3.2 Analytic Framework

The present study employed conversation analytical procedures to identify and analyse mechanisms of other-repair in the data. Conversation Analysis (CA) is a methodology of "integrating the details of language structure and the social constitution of meaning and action within an analytic framework capable of yielding cumulative and interlocking research findings" (Goodwin and Heritage 1990: 301) and is used as one of the most common and tenable analytic approaches for the analysis of naturally occurring conversations (Kaur 2016). The repair organisation is one of the key aspects of analysis in the CA research. As CA focuses on the description and analysis of the sequential organisation of talk-in-interaction and turn-taking at the micro level, CA can provide the detailed trajectories and positionings of repair action, which has the procedures of the trouble source, the initiation, and the repair proper (Schegloff 2000). In other words, CA has a great relevance on exploring the ways how speakers identify communicative troubles and react to the understanding problems and examining the overall structures of repair practices in turn-taking, and therefore the CA approach has been most frequently used in other ELF research into repair practices (e.g., Boström 2021, Hanusková 2019, Kaur 2020, Tsuchiya and Handford 2014). Given the procedures of communicative repair are heavily concerned with turn-taking, where the organisation of turns and the structural features in talk-in -interaction are key for analysis, conversation analysis (CA) was adopted to describe the patterns and features of other-repair and to identify how other-repair actions are initiated, completed,

and reacted in the turn constructional organisations of interaction in the data.

4. Findings

The findings are categorised by three major types of other-repair strategies used by the participants in the data: lexical replacement repair, summarising repair, and lexical supporting repair. The other-repair strategies were classified by the ways that the repairing speakers identified and rectified trouble sources in the prior turn, and the participants were found to either replace and modify the other's utterances when a meaning was confusing or clarify the main point of the prior turn by summarising it when the preceding turn was prolonged. The speakers also responded to the other speaker's troublesome turn-construction such as hesitation or pause and provided collaborative repair actions by suggesting candidate lexical items. According to the forms of trouble sources, the speakers initiated different repair strategies and achieved mutual understanding. Within the framework of CA, the analysis described the process of turn exchanges and negotiation of meanings in detail from the repair perspectives and identified the instances of communicative factors that triggered other-repair initiation and the outcomes of other-repair actions, that is, how repair actions are accepted and reacted by the original speaker.

4.1 Lexical Replacement Repair

When the lexical items used in the original speaker's turn do not convey explicit meanings or provide sufficient information or details, the other speakers signal uncertainty and initiate repair action. One common type of other-repair in the data is lexical replacement, where interlocutors modify troublesome words or unclear message with alternative items. By using lexical replacement of the other's talk, ELF speakers reconfirm the provided information and check whether their understanding matches the original speaker's intended meaning and whether there is any discrepancy between two. Speakers replace prior expressions with a general meaning with more specific and detailed words, and this kind of lexical replacement is used to approximate and better suit the lexical items for the context of interaction. Though the prior expression is neither erroneous nor incorrect, speakers modify it to more specific and detailed items since "the more general term has a broad spectrum of meanings and this can cause some confusion for the interlocutor" (Kaur 2011: 2710). By replacing the prior expression with more specific or alternative items, interlocutors move forwards to the intended meaning and facilitate communication when the speaker's expression may have potential ambiguity and in turn hamper shared understanding, and the following extract show the example of lexical replace repair.

Extract 1. A- Chinese, G Korean

1	A	if i choose to stay in southampton, i need to, if i er meet the score, i don't need to provide ielts score,
2		i mean the academic score
3	G	academic score?
4	A	yeah, if i take the (1.5), <u>i</u> reach the score sixteen
5	G	sixteen?
6	A	yeah, i mean the academic score
7	G	<u>ah (:) **you mean the credit**</u>
8	A	yeah, yeah, yeah
9	G	to finish your course, after finishing your course, ah (:) so if you get the six score, you don't need

10		to provi-, er submit the ielts
11	A	yeah

Speaker A talks about her plans to apply for a postgraduate program after the semester and explains that there are two different options. While she does not need to take the IELTS exam and provide the result when she applies to the same university as her undergraduate course, she must meet the certain score in the IELTS when she applies to other universities. In line 1, speaker A uses the words *the score*, but she alters it to *the academic score* in the ongoing turn. Speaker A may assume that the words *the score* can cause a confusion with the expression *ielts score* in the following segment of the turn, and therefore a more explicit referential identification is required to distinguish these two items. However, speaker G responds to speaker A's turn with echoing repetitions with a rising intonation, which often indicates non-understanding, in line 3 and 5. As her echoing repetition in line 3 shows, speaker G still seems not to ensure the meaning of the words *the score*. Moreover, the expression *the score sixteen* in line 4 may allow speaker G to confirm her misunderstanding on the meaning of the words *the score,* since the band score system of the IELTS ranges only from 0 to 9 points. Even after speaker G's echoing repetition in line 5, speaker A simply reiterates the expression *the academic score* in the following turn, and speaker G's acknowledgement token *ah* in line 7 signals that she has finally understood what speaker A means by the words *the academic score*. Speaker G replaces the confusing lexical item *the academic score* with *the credit*, which expresses a more explicit meaning. After speaker A's acceptance in line 8, speaker G clarifies the meaning of speaker A's utterance again by reiterating and reformulating what speaker A has said and confirms her own understanding. The use of lexical replacement can help speakers move forward a higher degree of precision for the meaning by "using an alternative term which expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible" (Dörnyei 1995: 58). The next extract also shows another example of the repair action of lexical replacement.

Extract 2. K- Korean, A- Chinese, M- Japanese

1	K	so although chinese government, china chinese allows high high level of freedom for the economy,
2		but the politics is still very limited, chinese government limits the people's freedom for the political
3		voice so
4	A	you mean like a vote for
5	K	vote or any, you need more freedom to use some more real information for example, through the
6		internet or
7	A	yeah, yeah, you can er do some kind of technology that you can visit some website by yourself, but
8	M	it's different, if technology can see information, but government basically prohibit
9	A	yeah, the government prohibit, but we also have some some measure, i mean the technical, you can,
10		i mean broke, broke the=
11	K	**=hacking, you mean like hacking, you mean many people broke the rule**
12	A	yeah
13	K	to use the information on the internet even though the chinese government prohibit or
14	A	yeah, you can break the rule, but the government can't find it.

In the first turn, speaker K points out the low level of political freedom in the Chinese society. In the following turn, speaker K describes the situation where the Chinese government restricts the freedom that the Chinese public can access the information on the government or political issues on the Internet. Although in the initial part of the turn speaker A supports speaker M's point that the government prohibits the public's access the information, she demonstrates that people can break the rule and access the information in an unofficial and illegal way. However,

the expression *the technical measure* in speaker A's utterance may cause confusion and ambiguity for mutual understanding, and immediately after speaker A's hesitation in line 9, speaker K produces lexical replacement and modifies the troublesome item in the prior turn to the alternative expression hacking and completes the sentence. Although there is no clear symptom of linguistic errors or mistakes in A's turn, speaker K moves toward initiating and performing overt repair without delay or gap. This form of repair initiation can help achieve a greater level of accuracy for mutual understanding and promote "the negotiation of lexical choice" (Kaur 2020: 6). Speaker K's other-repair action of lexical replacement is accepted and acknowledged by speaker A in the next turn. Speaker K clarifies speaker A's message by identifying and describing the meaning of breaking the rule with a detailed example of *hacking*. As seen in the examples of lexical replacement repair, the speakers tend to alter general and vague terms to more detailed and specific expressions to avoid potential ambiguity and achieve clarification and explicitness in understanding others' utterance. This repair strategy is used to enhance the speaker's own understanding of the others' utterance. Speakers can check whether what they have understood is correct by modifying the preceding utterance of others. Speakers replace or reformulate the prior expressions in their own words rather than simple repetition to confirm and clarify the meanings because speakers can overtly check their interpretation when they express in different words.

Extract 3. K- Korean, J, E- Chinese
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1   K      the chinese economy has been getting better and better
2   J      yeah, in recent years
3   K      i guess er many people started have started to have more, they want more freedom=
4   E      =yeah, you mean human right
5   K      yeah, human right or cultural or political=
6   E      =yeah
7   K      freedom, even though the chinese economy is almost er free trade or they they, the chinese
8          government provides a lot of freedom of economy, but the communism is still, the political situation
9          is still very predominantly by the central government
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In the conversation, speaker K demonstrates that the economic development in Chana may become the main reason why the Chinese people have begun to want more political freedom. However, the word *freedom* that speaker K used has a wide spectrum of meanings and can be used in diverse meanings in different contexts. In the following turn, speaker E accepts speaker K's opinion by responding to the turn with the backchannel cue *yeah*, which not only conveys that speaker E understood K's talk but also shows agreement and support to K's utterance, but she does not end her own turn with minimal response. Instead, speaker E reiterates the key word in speaker K's utterance with a form of repair against the original expression. Speaker E does not produce a full or partial repetition of the key word *freedom* but replaces the word with *human right*, which is a more detailed and specific expression than the prior item. Speaker E's lexical replacement is used to specify the meaning of the word *freedom*, since "under-specified utterances are obviously open to various interpretations and can result in misunderstanding" (Kaur 2011: 107). Speaker E's repaired lexical item is accepted by speaker K in the next turn, where the backchannel cue *yeah* signals acknowledgement and agreement, and the speaker inserts additional lexical items (*cultural or political*) to describe and clarify the meaning of the word *freedom*. Although the word *freedom* does not seem to trigger actual comprehension troubles for speaker E, speaker E may consider that the word *freedom* may cause ambiguity and consequently want to secure her understanding by confirming the meaning with the use of lexical replacement repair, by which the speaker can pre-empt and resolve a possible trouble source for mutual understanding from the outset. When the meaning of a speaker's utterance is unclear, interlocutors can make

different interpretations, which are not equated to the speaker's intended meaning, and consequently misunderstanding can occur. By replacing or modifying lexical items and expressions, interlocutors seek to verify the accuracy of their own understanding of the original speaker's turn.

Extract 4. K- Korean, M- Japanese
1   K   is the tuition fee expensive in japan? university tuition fee
2   M   private school is=
3   K   =i mean university one
4   M   private university, the private university is the same as [here]
5   K   [here?]
6   M   but public university is=
7   K   what is a public university?
8   M   national
9   K   waseda university is private?
10   M   private (1.0) tokyo university, tokyo and kyoto is public
11   K   **you mean, the universities with the local name is**
12   M   yeah, local name
13   K   local name is public one
14   M   yeah, public one, yeah, mostly (.) tuition fee is cheap

In the interaction above, both speakers are talking about the tuition fee in their own countries, and Korean speaker K asks whether the tuition fees of the universities in Japan are expensive. Speaker M compares the tuition fees in the universities in Japan and those in the UK and answers that there are some gaps of the tuition fees between the public and private universities. To compare and contrast the notion of the public and private universities, speaker M shows detailed examples of the public universities in the first place by providing their names such as Tokyo university or Kyoto university in line 10. Then speaker K repairs what speaker M has said in the following turn, where the detailed university names are replaced with the alternative expression, *the universities with the local name*. Speaker K's repaired turn is immediately accepted in the next turn by speaker M with the acknowledgement token *yeah* and a full repetition of the word *local name*. Instead of responding to the other speaker's utterance with a minimal response or simple backchannel cue, speaker K reacts with the modification of the other's prior talk. This kind of repair action can contribute to confirming the interlocutor's understanding and minimising any potential mismatch between the original speaker's intended meaning and the interlocutor's interpretation. One of the outstanding features in the lexical replacement repair in the data is the use of the discourse marker *you mean* prior to initiating the repair turn. *You mean* serves to mark understanding checks and explicitly indicate that a repair procedure has been initiated (Benjamin 2012, Schegloff 2000). The strategic use of repair markers can allow the original speaker to explain, confirm, and clarify what he/she has said and lead to shared understanding.

4.2 Summarising Repair

Another common form of other-repair practice in the data is summarising repair, where speakers reformulate the words or phrases in the prior utterances by summarising the gist of the other's talk. This type of repair frequently occurs when an original speaker has produced a long turn and acts as a way of comprehension checks,

which "is done not by asking a question but by either making an independent statement, or, by adding a specification to the interlocutor's previous utterance" (Svennevig 2003: 297). Speakers attempt to summarise the ongoing issues to re-establish and confirm an understanding, and the reformulation between participants can help converge the meanings each other and ensure a high degree of mutual understanding in ELF interactions (Lilja 2014). By providing an interpretation of what a speaker has said and proposing a candidate understanding, where an interlocutor "alters or transforms the trouble source in some way" and "checks whether he or she has adequately understood the trouble source" (Kendrick 2015: 174), the original speaker is invited to confirm that the intended meaning of his/her talk is properly conveyed and given an opportunity to clarify the utterance again. Candidate understanding can be used to help "progress the speaker's action" when the reference in the speaker's talk is ambiguous or confusing, and this form of other-repair is referred to as "affiliative candidate understanding:" (Antaki 2012: 531).

Extract 5. K, T- Korean, J- Chinese

1	K	but in this case, er even we are not family or cousin, but many of my friends has the same, have the
2		same [surname] as me
3	J	[same surname]
4	K	so it's [it's] normal
5	T	[and], china and korea quite similar in that sense, right?
6	K	yeah
7	T	**many people got the same family name, but it doesn't mean they are relative**
8	J	yeah, yeah
9	T	but in thailand, if you see the same family name, that's surely they are relative
10	J	ah, you so you you (1.0) if you belong to one one family, you should share the same family name
11	T	uh, and then=
12	J	=so so you have

In the earlier segment of talk, speaker K demonstrated the fact that a number of people in Korea have the identical surnames although they are not a member of the same family. Speaker T already displays his understanding and acceptance in line 5, where he provides additional information and further extends the issue to the Chinese case, but in the next turn T shows his understanding and checks whether the message is properly interpreted as intended by repeating K's prior turn with the use of reformulation. T's repaired turns are successfully accepted and acknowledged by both speakers, K and J, who respond to T's turns with the agreement token *yeah*. As the suggested reformulation is accepted, the clarification and explicitness are reinforced in the meaning-making process. By reproducing the other's talk in her own words, speaker T can confirm the proposed understanding and raise clarification of meanings. Furthermore, rather than reacting to the other's talk with minimal responses, the repair repetition can allow speakers not only to "give prominence to information that they regard as significant" but also to show their empathy and coherence and signal listenership and attention to the other (Lichtkoppler 2007: 48). From the pragmatic perspectives, this repair practice is not only a comprehension-oriented but also rapport-oriented strategy, which is involved in participation and solidarity. The strategic use of summarising repair and reformulation is also found in the following extract.

Extract 6. T, K- Korean, E- Chinese

1	T	but i think when they give give the name on something, they often try to make it er meaningful, like
2		capital in bangkok they call just, uh no, in in english we just call bangkok, but actually in thai it's a kind
3		of, actually above half pages
4	E	yeah, yeah, [yeah], i heard about that
5	K	[really?]
6	T	it's about half-pages
7	E	**it means a lot of er meanings**=

In the conversation, speaker T demonstrates that the names and titles in the Thai language tend to have exceptionally lengthy words and provides an example of the name of the capital city, Bangkok, in Thai. To emphasise how lengthy it is in Thai, T repeats that it is an almost half-page in the Thai words in the next turn. Although interlocutor E immediately displays agreement and understanding in the following turn, where she explicitly expresses that she already knows it by initiating the turn with the acknowledgement token *yeah*, T reiterates the utterance "*it's about half-pages*" in line 6. After T's repetitive utterances, speaker E repeats T's talk in other expressions. Through the repair action of interpretive summarising, speaker E reiterates, summarises, and explains the main issue in T's turn. E' repair action is not limited to confirming the intelligibility of the other's utterance but extended to showing the inference of an underlying meaning of the utterance. E interprets the possible reason why the word-length of Bangkok in Thai is so lengthy as the fact that it may have a lot of connotations. Although E already signalled her understanding on the sufficient extent in line 4, she adds her interpretation in different words. Speaker T's repetition in line 6 may trigger speaker E to provide further feedback in the following turn. By reformulating the other's utterance for their own, speakers attempt to develop the issues in the ongoing turn-construction and indicate co-participation and collaboration to the others. Rather than repairing with the use of interrogative questions and requesting the original speaker to clarify meanings, repairing speakers put forward candidate understanding and allow the original speaker to choose the suggested repair to accepted or rejected. The interpretative repetition can not only help avoid the original speaker's effort to repeat a turn but also overcome the limitation that a simple repetition of trouble sources can generate.

Extract 7. T, K- Korean, J- Chinese

1	T	er, buddhism is classed as a national religion, but we still allow people to be a muslim er something
2		christian or muslim, and then basically the king also su-, support, i mean he supports every [religion]
3	K	[religion]
4	T	yeah, but he's made clear he's a buddhist, i mean like a queen she makes clear she's a christian, but she
5		won't criticise muslim or something like that
6	K	ehm
7	J	it is=
8	T	=i mean more or less they have to erm (1.5) they have to something, they have to make it clear where
9		they are, but they also have to make sure it's not gonna coerce someone=
10	K	**=anyway the thai people have the entirely er, the entire freedom to choose their religion**
11	T	yeah
12	K	**you don't have any limitation or restriction**
13	T	yeah, no, no

In the extract above, speaker T explicates the social culture and attitudes to religion in Thailand and describes that even though Buddhism is officially a national religion, Thai people are allowed to have different religions. T

further explains the situation of religion in Thailand by providing a detailed example of the royal family, whose members respect each other's freedom of the choice of religion. Therefore, whereas the king is a Buddhist, the queen is a Christian, but each member neither criticises the others with different religions nor expresses offensive attitudes. In the third turn, T provides additional explanations on the reason why the royal family respects the diversity of religion in the country. After the sequential lengthy turns of speaker T, speaker K summarises the main point of T's talk in line 10 and repeats it in a shorter sentence in the following turn. Whereas K gives minimal responses and brief backchannels in the earlier turns, she finally provides a longer feedback to T's turn by producing a reformulation repair. Speaker K may assume that minimal responses and feedback are not sufficient to express her listenership and attention, and therefore she seems to decide to reformulate the lengthy utterance of the prior speaker in a more concise and comprehensible way to ensure accuracy of understanding. K's suggested repair is successfully accepted and agreed by speaker T as in line 11 and 13, and this repair action allows speaker K to confirm her understanding and enhance clarity in the negotiation of meanings. However, the interpretive repair is not necessarily accepted by the original speaker as in the next extract.

Extract 8. K-Korean, E, J-Chinese

1	K	and they have the less less freedom political freedom than other countries just democratic countries,
2		so as people er open their eyes, and they experience more economic freedom, maybe they start to
3		have more eager or more hope to have some kind of political freedom
4	E	*@@@*
5	K	is it true? or they are still satisfied with the government system or
6	J	for me, i still support our government to to get better and better, anyway it's our party to get our
7		country healthier, even though there are many drawbacks or inequality you can see, but it's something
8		development something emerged, just let the time government do get better
9	K	**you mean, the political freedom and economic freedom is separated**
10	J	the political freedom is, actually we have lots of=
11	K	=freedom

In the interaction, the participants are talking about the issue of the political freedom and human right in the Chinese society. Korean speaker K explains that the changing attitudes to the political freedom in China may be attributed to the fact that the Chinese people have experienced the rapid economic growth, and the growing economic freedom may lead to the desire for the political freedom. However, Chinese interlocutor J does not entirely agree with K's opinion and expresses his support to the Chinese government. J illustrates that the Chinese government has tried to get better although inequality and human right issues are still problematic and challenging. After J's long turn, K produces summarising interpretation, and the major issue of J's talk is clarified. K's candidate understanding targets an uncertainty in the J's talk and refines J's utterance by reformulation to minimise potential misunderstanding and confusion. Rather than calling for correction or repair from the original speaker with a direct question such as *what do you mean*?, speaker K initiates the repair with discourse marker *you mean*, which explicitly signals the reformulation of the prior turn, and clarifies the main point of speaker J's talk. Reformulated repair can help ensure accuracy of understanding since from the outset it can remove a potential danger that the trouble source speaker's own repaired utterance can trigger another confusion and lack of clarity. However, K's proposed understanding is not fully accepted as J avoids a direct answer to K's repairing turn. Instead, J responds with a supportive stance to the Chinese government by demonstrating that they already have a lot of political freedom. Although this form of other-repair is commonly used to confirm the proposed understanding, it also

leaves the opportunity that the trouble source speaker can provide the repair solution.

4.3 Lexical Supporting Repair

Lexical supporting is another common type of other-repair in the data, and this repair action is referred to as "lexical suggestion" (Kirkpatrick 2010), "lexical continuation" (Svennevig 2003), or "collaborative utterance building" (Kalocsai 2011). Lexical supporting repair is the way of collaborative production of turns since it offers a possible solution when a speaker has a trouble to complete an utterance and shows a reciprocal and cooperative nature of other-repair in ELF. A repairing speaker provides a relevant and appropriate lexical item to a trouble source speaker at a word search moment, and the candidate item "fits into the grammatical and semantic structure of the trouble-source turn" (Kendrick 2015: 175). By suggesting a next turn component, ELF speakers engage in co-construction of meanings and help the interaction progress. In lexical supporting repair, speakers share a role as a co-participant in multi-party interactions and jointly construct turns by suggesting lexical items and completing the other's utterance on the turn-constructional unit. This type of repair action is neither intended to interrupt the other's ongoing turn nor to claim the floor, but it is mainly used to provide support and assistance to a trouble source speaker and to show listenership and involvement (Lerner 1993). Lexical supporting repair frequently occurs when the other speaker makes a trouble in speaking such as pause or hesitation, which may cause understanding problems and interrupt the flow of interaction as in the following extracts.

Extract 9. Y, P- Thai, G- Korean

1	Y	but the government news talked yesterday most thai people go to the airport and they=
2	G	=to welcome the movie start or singer
3	Y	they were sent back, they were sent back @@
4	G	uh, huh?
5	Y	by the immigration officer
6	P	@@ immigration officer in
7	G	really?
8	Y	yeah, many of them
9	P	many
10	Y	we don't know the reason, why, we have to go back without, you know er anything in korea
11	P	but i used to used to go to korea twice er (1.5)
12	G	**for for tourism**
13	P	yes

In the conversation, Thai speakers Y and P are talking about their experiences of the visit to Korea, and Speaker Y describes the situation that the Korean migration office has refused many Thai visitors' entry into Korea, and consequently many of Thai people who arrive at the Korean airport are sent back to their country. In line 11, the other Thai speaker P mentions that he has experiences to visit Korea twice before, but he makes a hesitation at the end of the turn. Korean speaker G produces a lexical support immediately after P's hesitation to help repair the other's incomplete turn. As P's hesitation and lexical speech perturbation signal that speaker P is facing difficulty in producing the utterance, the other speaker G interrupts P's turn to suggest a candidate word and complete the turn. Immediate action of supporting repair supports displayed difficulties of the other's production of turn although it can temporarily interrupt an ongoing turn. In other words, collaborative repair work shows the speaker's "willingness to intervene and offer assistance in order to ensure its successful outcome", and this form of other-

repair "has a strongly proactive character and serves to pre-empt ambiguity, misunderstanding and communication breakdown" (Hanusková 2019: 48). Therefore, lexical supporting repair provides a linguistic support that allows an original speaker to keep on completing a turn and can help the flow of interaction move forward. G's lexical suggestion is ratified in the following turn by the trouble source speaker P with the use of acknowledgement token *yes*. The original speaker's hesitation or pause often leads to the other speaker's collaborative turn construction as in the following extract.

Extract 10. H, K- Korean, E-Chinese
1	H	it was fun, i got a fun, but saipan is actually it's very boring p-, place, yeah
2	E	@@@
3	K	only for the tourism?
4	H	yeah, tourism, yeah, you can stay like all week or three nights, that's enough
5	K	[ah (:)]
6	E	[@@@@]
7	H	one year, uh (:), i had a good time, but yeah it wasn't the place that i can live for [all my] life
8	K	[so] did they provide
9		any accommodation for you or?
10	H	yeah, they did
11	K	wow, good, so you stayed at hotel?
12	H	no @@
13	K	no
14	H	some internship other other like hotel, stayed in hotel room, but i didn't stayed in the hotel room, i
15		stayed with, really like horrible thing
16	K	ah
17	H	<u>saipan is just tourism (2.0) er=</u>
18	K	**=<u>destination</u>**
19	H	yeah, destination, not really developed place
20	K	ah

In the extract above, Korean speaker H illustrates his experience that visited Saipan for his internship. Speaker H explains that Saipan is famous for tourism, and three or more days are enough for tourism. The other participants in the conversation keep listening to his talk and merely provide minimal responses or backchannel whereas speaker H mainly leads the conversation by describing his experience of staying in Saipan. H continues to talk about his experience to stay in Saipan, and while he describes his negative experience of accommodation, he repeats and stresses that Saipan is a simply good place for a short visit for tourism. However, in line 17, H attempts to add some more utterance after the word *tourism*, but his hesitation and pause in the turn-in-construction provide the other interlocutor with a chance to join co-construction of turns and help the interaction flow. When speakers encounter difficulties in searching an appropriate word "but are not always able to self-correct, the recipient may assume a more supportive role when able to" (Kaur 2020: 4). Although speaker K temporarily interrupts H's turn, the turn is immediately returned to the original speaker H, and K's lexical suggestion is accepted and ratified by H with the use of acknowledgement token *yeah* and repetition. After K's repair, H takes up the turn again and continues to complete his turn. This kind of supporting repair is referred to as "duets", where participants collaborate for participation in a multi-party conversation as if they are one (Szczepek 2000). Participants in duets share a turn, which is a so-called 'subturn', and possess an equal role and authority to talk about the topic to show understanding and participation. Therefore, such repair action is not generally assumed as interruption but

considered as joint turn construction because in most cases a transition of a syntactic, lexical, and prosodic structure does not occur in a duet subturn, but the original turn is continued in the subturn. Such interactional duets indicate the speakers' attention and involvement and the effective way of signalling solidarity and rapport to the other speaker.

Extract 11. A, E- Chinese, K- Korean, M-Japanese

1	A	when it is in winter, we use the air-condition, air condition has two, two (1.5) two functions
2	K	ehm
3	A	we use it in summer and in winter
4	M	yeah, yeah, the same, but in the northern part of china they use the same, i don't know=
5	E	=the heater
6	M	yeah, heater
7	E	ehm
8	M	yeah, like the uk, so it's different
9	K	ehm (1.0), i see. these days in the con-, in the modern modern society, modern world, er we use the oil
10		or the er (1.5)
11	M	**<u>gasoline or petrol</u>**
12	K	yeah, petrol to er to heat the room was a central heating, but traditionally we use the wood
13	M	yeah, it's the same

In the conversation, the participants are talking about the heating system in their own countries. Chinese speaker A demonstrates a common method of the Chinese heating system, which has both functions of air conditioner and heater. In line 9, speaker K transfers the topic to the materials of heating in the modern society, but she makes a pause in the on-going talk. Immediately after K's short pause, Japanese speaker M provides lexical suggestions for turn continuation, and K accepts and ratifies M's lexical suggestion and keeps her talk for the completion of turn. Given that pause or hesitation tend to project the speaker's troubles in turn production, the other speakers are invited to provide a missing slot of a turn and elicit relevant information for incomplete turn organisation. The participants collaboratively take part in producing sequential construction of turns in the turn-in-progress of the original speaker and produce a syntactically and semantically coherent sequence. Firth (1996) describes this repair practice as "candidate completions", which are communicative actions that actively join the other speaker's incomplete and unclear language production and serve "to effectively make the other's abnormal talk appear normal" (p. 245). This repair pattern of collaborative turn construction frequently occurs at the word-search moment, and it can be successfully accomplished when speakers keep monitoring each other's turn and fully understand the meanings to join in co-construction of the following slot of turn. Lexical supporting repair shows the speaker's collaborative intention and a great degree of convergence to the other speakers. Whereas lexical supporting repair is accomplished based on the information given in a preceding talk, in many other cases participants anticipate "the not-yet-completed sequence by drawing shared knowledge and background information to organise a further talk" (Lee 2016: 68). Lexical supporting repair is a way of collaborative turn-construction and showing understanding rather than interruption, which is intended to compete the floor, signal disagreement, or alter a topic at a non-transition relevant place (Farley 2008). Through co-construction of utterances, speakers contribute to collaborative production of a meaning-making process, and this practice shows the cooperative and mutually supportive nature of ELF communication.

5. Discussions and Conclusion

The findings suggest that ELF speakers engage in diverse clarification and repair strategies to clarify unclear message of the others' talk and to offer elaboration and support in co-construction of meanings. The participants are found to employ other-repair strategies of lexical replacement, interpretive summarising, and lexical supporting. The ELF speakers in the data display and confirm their own understanding to the others by replacing and modifying troublesome items for explicitness and attempt to resolve ambiguity and uncertainty to achieve mutual understanding. Other-repair in the data is involved in many cases in repetition of the prior utterance but in different words, which are used to check the interpretation of the utterance. This type of other-repair tends to be more engaged in meaning rather than form alone, and the speakers repair others by using reformulation, where they represent the other speaker's meaning in qualitatively distinct ways in a subsequent turn. Replacement or modification is involved in "saying more or less the same thing but viewing the events from a different perspective and therefore using other words" (Svennevig 2003: 287). This practice is "a circular communication mode where messages are repeated with the aim to avoid misunderstandings" (Boström 2021: 79). Rather than simply accepting a message with acknowledgement tokens such as *yeah* or *ok*, the speakers produce partial of full repetition of the received message to confirm whether the message has been interpreted as intended.

When speakers realise that there is a potential mismatch between what the original speaker intended and what they have understood, they initiate the negotiation strategies to resolve understanding troubles. The sources of understanding troubles in communication encompass different linguistic categories including lexical, grammatical, and pronunciation errors, imperfect speech delivery, lack of clarification, or mishearing that may hinder shared understanding between participants in communication. In order to resolve understanding troubles and enhance clarity in interaction, speakers continue to monitor others' utterance and make adept use of repair strategies. When an interlocutor does not signal troubles in understanding or initiate a clarification sequence, the trouble source speaker cannot detect and recognise the other's incomprehension. Furthermore, as Pietikäinen (2018) points out, "in situations where the hearer is afraid of losing face by admitting to not having understood, where he/she renders the non-understood utterance unimportant or hopes that the issue will be clarified later in the conversation, non-understanding can remain unnoticed and lead into further incomprehension-related problems" (p. 190). Although some early ELF research argues that ELF speakers do not always initiate the negotiation of meaning for mutual understanding but tend to adopt a 'let -it-pass' strategy, where a listener "lets the unknown or unclear action, word or utterance pass on the common sense assumption that it will either become clear or redundant as talk progresses" (Firth 1996: 243), the more recent ELF studies have shown that ELF speakers are actively involved in diverse other-repair strategies to confirm their own understanding and co-construct meanings in interaction (Beuter 2019, Björkman 2014, Deterding 2013, Hanusková 2019). When a message is unclear and ambiguous, ELF speakers neither disregard the problem nor act as if they understand the meaning.

It is assumed that other-repair occurs mainly in native speaker (NS)-non-native speaker (NNS) conversations, where NSs repair and correct NNSs' productions of trouble sources, because there is a linguistic asymmetry between NSs and NNSs (Kurhila 2001, Wong 2000). NNSs might lack their linguistic knowledge and consequently explicitly call the NSs for help. Even when NNSs initiate self-repair, NSs immediately provide other-repair for NNSs, where NSs act as an language expert in response to NNSs' initiation of self-repair (Kasper 2004). However, NSs do not necessarily use repair as embedded corrections of the NNSs' utterances. While linguistic asymmetries can exit in NS-NNS communications, ELF communication is not always the case of unilateral relationships for repair action. As Kaur (2020: 4) puts it, "who corrects, and how and when correction is actioned is a negotiated matter that takes into account, amongst others, the speaker's display of trouble and the recipient's ability to address

the trouble". In addition, repair is not simply "an attempt to get things right but also trying to make things clear and explicit" (Amin 2019: 246) as shown in the findings in the data. Repair is not limited to rectify linguistic perturbation but extended to comprehensible clarity and explicitness in a broader sense. ELF speakers use other-repair strategies to elaborate expressions and enhance appropriateness of the utterances rather than remedying error or mistakes.

The result of the study supports that ELF speakers do not take understanding for granted, but they work hard to achieve it by pre-empting understanding troubles before they occur and promoting explicitness (Pietikäinen 2018). As the awareness and signal of understanding troubles can lead to "the move to check the accuracy of the understanding achieved", speakers in interaction need to explicitly indicate trouble sources of understanding from the outset (Kaur 2011: 96). The meanings can be clarified and confirmed when speakers overtly indicate and characterise what and where understanding problems are in a more specific way. However, other-repair in ELF interaction is not limited to signalling problems, but ELF speakers actively engage in initiating and performing other-repair actions in a proactive way. A recipient provides a candidate understanding, which involves "replacement, continuation, or insertion on the trouble source turn" (Kendrick 2015: 187), and then the trouble source speaker may accept or correct it. Once the recipient modifies and alters the trouble source in alternative ways, the trouble source speaker gives a feedback or response to the repaired turn, and the recipient can confirm whether the trouble source has been properly understood or not. As seen in the data, other-repair practice is a common and effective way of enhancing mutual understanding and expressing collaboration and support in ELF communication. By using a variety of other-repair strategies, ELF speakers can avert potential problems of understanding and signal active listenership and involvement in negotiation of meanings. However, given that the present study is based on a small scale of empirical data, the future research needs to be conducted in various contexts of ELF with speakers from different lingua culture backgrounds to explore and better understand the features and underlying principles of other-repair strategies in ELF communication. The more empirical data on the frequency, patterns, and reactions of other-repair can help explore how other-repair practices operate in ELF to deal with troubles in understanding and whether other-repair is used as an effective way of clarification and support in diverse communicative situations.

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Transcription Conventions

[ ]	overlapping speech
=	latching
(0.0)	extended pause in seconds

(.)	brief pause
(:)	stretched preceding sounds or letters
?	a rising intonation
@	one syllable of laughter
CAPITALS	stressed words
XXX	unintelligible words

Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Level: Tertiary