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SEMINARARBEIT

“Repair and evidence in conversational interaction”

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1 Research question

Speakers regularly repair an utterance when a word, reference, or assumption is not immediately understood. This paper asks how a repair changes the next available contribution in a conversation. The focus is not only on whether a listener receives the intended meaning, but also on how the repair reorganizes turn-taking and makes an interpretation publicly accountable.

2 Analytic approach

The analysis treats a conversational turn as situated action. A first version of a phrase establishes a candidate interpretation; a following correction narrows or replaces that interpretation. The distinction matters because a repair can preserve the social action while changing its lexical realization. For example, replacing a technical term with a familiar description may keep a request intact while lowering the effort needed to respond.

2.1 A small data record

The following table records the features to annotate in each excerpt.

Table 1: Suggested annotation fields for repair sequences.

Field	Question
Trouble source	What made the first formulation uncertain?
Repair initiator	Who signals or performs the repair?
Turn consequence	Which next action becomes possible?

3 Interpretation

A repair is therefore both a linguistic adjustment and an interactional resource. When the speaker reformulates without yielding the floor, the sequence can display confidence and preserve momentum. When the listener initiates the repair, the same sequence can make a problem visible while leaving the original speaker responsible for the final formulation. The meaning of the repair emerges from this timing rather than from the replacement word alone.

4 Conclusion

The proposed annotation separates the source of trouble from the social effect of resolving it. That separation makes comparisons across excerpts possible without assuming that every repair has the same purpose. A larger study should test the scheme on conversations from different settings and should report cases where the repair remains unresolved.

References

[1] Emanuel A. Schegloff, Gail Jefferson, and Harvey Sacks. The preference for self-correction in the organization of repair in conversation. *Language*, 53(2), 1977.

[2] Jack Sidnell, editor. *Conversation Analysis: Comparative Perspectives*. Cambridge University Press, 2009.