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THE PREFERENCE FOR SELF-CORRECTION IN THE ORGANIZATION OF REPAIR IN CONVERSATION

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An 'organization of repair' operates in conversation, addressed to recurrent problems in speaking, hearing, and understanding. Several features of that organization are introduced to explicate the mechanism which produces a strong empirical skewing in which self-repair predominates over other-repair, and to show the operation of a preference for self-repair in the organization of repair. Several consequences of the preference for self-repair for conversational interaction are sketched.*

1. SELF- AND OTHER-CORRECTION. Among linguists and others who have at all concerned themselves with the phenomenon of 'correction' (or, as we shall refer to it, 'repair'; cf. below, §2.1), a distinction is commonly drawn between 'self-correction' and 'other-correction', i.e. correction by the speaker of that which is being corrected vs. correction by some 'other'.¹ Sociologists take an interest in such a distinction; its terms—'self' and 'other'—have long been understood as central to the study of social organization and social interaction.² For our concerns in this paper, 'self' and 'other' are two classes of participants in interactive social

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¹ Bolinger ([1953] 1965:248) writes:

'What speakers avoid doing is as important as what they do. Self-correction of speech and writing, and the correction of others in conversation ("I can't understand what you say"), in classrooms, and over editorial desks is an unending business, one that determines the outlines of our speech just as acceptances determine its mass. Correction, the border beyond which we say "no" to an expression, is to language what a seacoast is to a map. Up to now, linguistic scientists have ignored it because they could see in it nothing more than the hankerings of pedants after a standard that is arbitrary, prejudiced and personal. But it goes deeper. Its motive is intelligibility, and in spite of the occasional aberrations that have distracted investigators from the central facts, it is systematic enough to be scientifically described.'

Not much has been made of the distinction—in part, perhaps, because the disciplines have used it to divide up their work, self-correction being occasionally discussed by linguists (since it regularly occurs within the sentence?), e.g. Hockett 1967 and DuBois 1974, and other-correction by psychologists, e.g. Garvey, *ms.* They have rarely both been in the attention of the same investigator, who might then address himself to the relation between them.

² Under various guises—self/other, individual/society, ego/alter—and through various understandings of the relationship between them—opposition, complementarity etc.—this pair of notions goes back to the origins of American sociology (G. H. Mead, Cooley etc.), to the classical figures of European sociology (Marx, Weber, Durkheim), and beyond the origins of sociology as an academically specialized discipline to the origins of social and political philosophy. For one account of the development of the theme that 'external control,' i.e. control by others, will not adequately account for, or guarantee, social order, cf. Parsons 1937.

organizations—in particular those which characterize the sequential organization of conversation, specifically its turn-taking system.³ Thought of in terms of the social organization of conversational interaction, self-correction and other-correction are not to be treated as independent types of possibilities or events, nor as structurally equivalent, equipotential, or equally 'valued'. Rather (and this is a central theme of our paper), self-correction and other-correction are related organizationally, with self-correction preferred to other-correction.⁴

One sort of gross, prima-facie evidence bears both on the relevance of the distinction and on the preference relationship of its components. Even casual inspection of talk in interaction finds self-correction vastly more common than other-correction. In locating a strong empirical skewing, the relevance of the distinction is afforded some initial rough support; the direction of the skewing—toward self-correction—affords one sort of evidence for the preference relationship of its components. We are, therefore, encouraged to explore the organizational mechanisms operating in any particular sequential environment—which, by their case-by-case operation, produce the observed over-all skewed distribution.⁵

In this paper, one in a series of efforts on repair organization,⁶ we introduce some findings about several aspects of the organization of repair, in order to clarify the distinction between self- and other-correction, and to understand the organization that relates them in particular environments in such a manner as to produce a strong over-all skewing.

2. CORRECTION AND REPAIR; INITIATION AND OUTCOME. Examination of the data of conversation requires several amplifications of the distinction between self-correction and other-correction.⁷

³ Cf. Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974.

⁴ We use the term 'preference' technically to refer not to motivations of the participants, but to sequence- and turn-organizational features of conversation. For example, 'dispreferreds' are structurally delayed in turns and sequences, and are (or may be) preceded by other items; dispreferreds may be formed as preferreds. Cf. Pomerantz 1975.

⁵ As in the organization of turn-taking, the gross facts which characterize large amounts of conversational data are the product of rules, and systems of rules, which operate on particular sequential environments. For example, it is a set of rules that operate on 'possible turn completions' which produces the set of gross characteristics of conversation enumerated in Sacks et al. 1974, where 'possible turn completion' is an instance of a 'particular sequential environment'. Similarly with repair, we are interested in finding mechanisms which operate on a 'case-by-case' (or environment-by-environment) basis, yielding as a by-product some observable orderliness for the aggregate. One research aim in our work on the organization of repair has been to find and characterize the 'value' of 'environment' in terms of which 'case-by-case' operation of repair is organized.

⁶ Cf. Jefferson 1972, 1973, 1975; Jordan & Fuller 1975; Sacks & Schegloff 1977; Sacks et al. 1974, *passim*; Schegloff 1976.

⁷ The research reported here is based on a large corpus of audio tapes (and a smaller corpus of video tapes) of naturally occurring conversation, and transcripts of those tapes. The conversations are of various sorts, with various sorts of parties, and combinations of them. For a glossary of symbols used in the data citations, see Sacks et al. (1974:731-4). Several of the notational conventions of special relevance to this paper are: a dash (-), used to indicate a cut-off of the preceding word or sound; colons (:), used to indicate stretching of the preceding sound; and numbers in parentheses (0.8), used to indicate silence in tenths of a second. In some cases

2.1. The term ‘correction’ is commonly understood to refer to the replacement of an ‘error’ or ‘mistake’ by what is ‘correct’. The phenomena we are addressing, however, are neither contingent upon error, nor limited to replacement.

2.11. Some occurrences, clearly in the domain with which we are concerned, do not involve the replacement of one item by another. For example, a ‘word search’, which can occur if an item (e.g. a word) is not available to a speaker when ‘due’, is in the domain which we address, but is not a ‘replacement’ or a ‘correction’:

- (1) Clacia: B’t, a–another one theh wentuh school with me
 → wa:s a girl na:med uh, (0.7) °W’t th’ hell wz
 → er name. °Karen. Right. Karen. [Clacia:17]
- (2) Olive: → Yihknow Mary uh::: (0.3) oh:: what was it.
 → Uh:: Tho:mpson. [NB:X:1:17]

2.12. It is a notable fact that the occurrence or distribution of repair/correction is not well-ordered by reference to the occurrence of ‘error’. Repair/correction is sometimes found where there is no hearable error, mistake, or fault:

- (3) Bernice: → Dean came up en ’e said ‘I’d like–’ ‘Bernice?’
 → he said ‘I’d like t’ take you over tuh Shakey’s
 en buy you a beer.’ [NB:IV:2:6]
- (4) Ken: → Sure enough ten minutes later the bell r–
 → the doorbell rang ... [GTS:1:2:11]
- (5) L: Is his one dollar allright or should he send more
 → than that for the p– tuh cover the postage. [Bookstore:1394]

Furthermore, hearable error does not necessarily yield the occurrence of repair/correction:

- (6) Avon Lady: And for ninety-nine cents uh especially in,
 → Rapture, and the Au Coeur which is the newest
 → fragrances, uh that is a very good value.
- Customer: Uh huh, [Ladies:1:1:9:4]
- (7) Bernice: → ... en I think if more parents of kids these age c’d participate in this
 kind of an atmosphere, ‘hhhh it would certainly help develop a lot
 of understanding. A:n’ Mister Warden said that was certainly one
 of the things thet he hed been considering ... [NB:IV:2:8]

2.13. Accordingly, we will refer to ‘repair’ rather than ‘correction’ in order to capture the more general domain of occurrences. Self- and other-CORRECTION, then, are particular types in a domain more generally formulated by a distinction between self- and other-REPAIR. We will refer to that which the repair addresses as the ‘repairable’ or the ‘trouble source’. In view of the point about repair being initiated with no apparent error, it appears that nothing is, in principle, excludable from the class ‘repairable’.

2.2. ‘Self-repair’ and ‘other-repair’ (as well as the ‘correction’ sub-types) refer to the success of a repair procedure. However, efforts at repair sometimes fail:⁸

the transcripts have been simplified by the omission of some symbols. Arrows indicate the location of the phenomenon for which a segment is initially cited.

⁸ In view of the point made above about the relation between repair and error, ‘failure’ needs to be distinguished from those cases in which an apparent trouble has occurred, but no effort to repair it is undertaken. ‘Failure’ refers to cases in which a repair procedure is initiated and does not yield a successful solution. ‘Failure’ is a complex category; although it is frequently

- (8) C: C'n you tell me- (1.0) D'you have any records
 → of whether you- whether you- who you sent-
 → Oh(hh) shit.
 G: What'd you say?
 C: I'm having the worst trouble talking. [BS:2:1:6]
 (9) K: Didju know that guy up there et- oh. What th' hell is'z name usetuh
 work up't (Steeldinner) garage did their body work.for'em.
 (1.5)
 K: Uh:::ah, (0.5) Oh:: he meh- uh, (0.5) His wife ran off with Jim
 McCa:nn.
 (3.2)
 K: → Y'know 'oo I'm talking about,
 M: → No:,
 (0.5)
 K: → °Oh:: shit.
 (0.5)
 K: He had. This guy had, a beautiful thirty-two O:lds.
 [Goodwin, Auto Discussion:26]

Cf. also 16 below.

Given the possibility of failure, we are led to notice that it and successful repair are OUTCOMES, and thereby to notice that the INITIATION of reparative segments and their completion (whether with success or with failure) can be quite distinct.

Then we note: the one who performs/accomplishes a repair is not necessarily the one who initiated the repair operation. In fact, both self-repair and other-repair (and failure as well) can be, and sometimes are, arrived at from either of the (for conversation) exclusive types of repair initiation: SELF-initiation of repair (i.e. by speaker of the trouble source) and OTHER-initiation of repair (i.e. by any party other than speaker of the trouble source). Examples follow.

2.21. Self-repair can issue from self-initiation:

- (10) N: She was givin me a:ll the people that
 → were go:ne this yea:r I mean this
 → quarter y' // know
 J: Yeah [NJ:4]
 (11) Vic: En- it nevuh happen. Now I could of
 wen' up there en told the parents
 → myself but then the ma- the husbin
 liable tuh come t'd'doh ... [US:4]

2.22. Self-repair can issue from other-initiation:

- (12) Ken: Is Al here today?
 Dan: Yeah.
 (2.0)
 Roger: → He is? hh eh heh
 Dan: → Well he was. [GTS:5:3]

2.23. Other-repair can issue from self-initiation:

- (13) B: → He had dis uh Mistuh W- whatever k- I can't
 think of his first name, Watts on, the one thet wrote // that piece,
 A: → Dan Watts. [BC:Green:88]

marked by an overt withdrawal of the repair effort, it has different forms and types. Such complexity is not in point for the present discussion, which takes note only of the gross possibility of failure. In that regard it should be noted that, although the possibility of failure cannot be ignored, in the vast majority of cases repair is successful and quick.

2.24. Other-repair can issue from other-initiation:

- (14) B: Where didju play ba:sk//etbaw.
 A: (The) gy:m.
 B: In the gy:m?
 A: Yea:h. Like grou(h)p therapy. Yuh know=
 B: = [Oh:::
 A: = [half the group that we had la:s' term wz there en we jus' playing
 arou:nd.
 B: → Uh- fooling around.
 A: Eh- yeah ... [TG:3]
 (Cf. also 64-69 below.)

2.25. Failure can issue from self-initiation:

- (15) Mike: I never heard it etheh.
 (0.7)
 Mike: → Awl I her- All I- Awl I ree- all you- all //
 I ree-
 Vic: → You knew duh broa//:d. [Frankel:US:26]
 (Cf. also 8-9 above and 21 below.)

2.26. Failure can issue from other-initiation:

- (16) Roger: It's kinduva- // kinduv weird.
 Dan: heh
 (2.0)
 Roger: Whadda you think.
 (2.0)
 Ken: → Hm?
 Roger: → Fergit it. [GTS:5:42]

2.27. Whereas we earlier proposed a typological amplification by shifting from a distinction between self- and other-correction to self- and other-repair, we now propose a sequence-organizational amplification with a distinction between repair-INITIATION and repair-OUTCOME. This distinction is motivated by the fact that repair is a sequential phenomenon involving repair-'segments' in the course of ongoing talk—segments which have an organization of their own, including, as segment parts, 'initiation' and 'outcome'. We have focused attention on one of these, initiation. Now we ask: Is the initial distinction between self and other (earlier applied to outcomes) relevant and viable when applied to INITIATION? If it is, it promises to be part of the organization we aim to describe, because 'self' and 'other' are always features of particular sequential environments, and potentially provide the focus for a mechanism that operates case by case.

3. REPAIR INITIATION BY SELF AND OTHER. The evidence is compelling for the relevance of distinguishing, among reparative/corrective efforts, between those which are initiated by the speaker of the trouble source and those which are initiated by any other party. Three sorts of evidence may be mentioned.

3.1. Self- and other-initiations have regular, and clearly different, PLACEMENTS relative to the trouble source whose repair they initiate.⁹

⁹ Elaboration of the following account of the distribution of the initiation of repair, and of that presented below in §§4.2-4.3, will be the topic of another report.

3.11. Self-initiated repairs have their initiations placed in three main types of positions. First, they may be placed within the same turn as their trouble source:¹⁰

- (17) Deb: Kin you wait til we get home? We'll be home in five minutes.
 Anne: Ev//en less th'n that.
 Naomi: → But c'd we- c'd I stay u:p?
 (0.2)
 Naomi: once we get // ho:me,
 Marty: For a few minutes,
 Deb: Once you get yer nightgown o:n, [Post-party:11]
 (Cf. 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 16 above for other instances;¹¹ also cf. data citations in Sacks et al. 1974, e.g. #21, p. 717).

Second, they may be placed in that turn's transition space:¹²

- (18) L: An 'en bud all of the doors 'n things were taped up=
 L: → =I mean y'know they put up y'know that kinda paper 'r stuff,
 L: → the brown paper. [Super-seedy:3]
 (19) J: He's stage manager.
 (2.0)
 J: → He's actually first assistant but- he's calling the show.
 J: → They take turns=
 J: → =he and the production manager take turns calling the show
 [MO, Family Dinner:I:9]
 (Cf. also 10 above.)

Third, they may be placed in third turn to the trouble-source turn, i.e. in the turn subsequent to that which follows the trouble-source turn:

- (20) Hannah: And he's going to make his own paintings.
 Bea: Mm hm,
 Hannah: → And- or I mean his own frames.
 Bea: Yeah, [SBL:1:1:12:11]
 (21) L: I read a very interesting story today,
 M: uhm, what's that.
 L: → w'll not today, maybe yesterday, aw who knows when, huh, it's
 called Dragon Stew. [Super-seedy:SP]
 (22) Annie: Which one::s are closed, an which ones are open.
 Zebrach: Most of 'em. This, this, // this, this ((pointing))
 Annie: → I 'on't mean on the shelters, I mean on the roads.
 Zebrach: Oh: [CDHQ:I:52]

¹⁰ We reserve for another report discussion of the sub-distribution of repair-initiations at various positions within same turn.

¹¹ Two comments about the cross-citation of data: (1) We refer in the text to data segment 16. That segment's arrows locate the phenomenon being discussed *THERE*. That segment happens also to include an instance of the phenomenon being considered *HERE*, but it is not arrowed. For cross-citations of data in this paper, therefore, arrows are not of decisive import. (2) We occasionally make cross-reference to other papers of ours to show data that display phenomena we are discussing which have not been selected for that purpose.

¹² Cf. Sacks et al. (1974:702-6). The transition space, roughly, is the environment of a turn's possible completion, at which possible transition to a next speaker becomes relevant. Although the transition space may begin a bit before the possible completion point, and last a bit into the beginning of a next turn, for our purposes here it may be thought of as the 'beat' that potentially follows the possible completion point of a turn.

In the data on transition-space repair, we have put those components of a turn that follow a possible completion (i.e. are in or after the transition space) on new lines. Thus: what is typographically represented on several new lines is, nonetheless, further talk by a same speaker with no intervening talk by another.

3.12. Repair initiations by any other party occupy one main position: the turn just subsequent to the trouble-source turn. Instances abound in the various data citations that have preceded and will follow: e.g., in 8, G's turn; in 16, Ken's turn; and in 12 and 14, which have multiple other-initiations. Cf. also Sacks et al., #22, p. 717, and the ten further citations there.

3.2. Self- and other-initiations are done with regular, and clearly different, INITIATOR TECHNIQUES.

3.21. Self-initiations within the same turn (which contains the trouble source) use a variety of non-lexical speech perturbations, e.g. cut-offs, sound stretches, 'uh's etc., to signal the possibility of repair-initiation immediately following:¹³

- (23) A: → W- when's yer uh, weh- you have one day y'only have one course uh?
[TG:5]
- (24) A: She must know somebuddy because all those other teachers they got
rid of .hhhh
(0.3)
- B: → Yeh I bet they got rid of all the one:: Well one I had, t! 'hhhh in the
firs' term there, fer the firs' term of English, she die::d hhuh-
uhh // .hhh [TG:8]
- (Cf. also 1-5, 8, 11, 13, 15-17 above, as well as the data in Jefferson 1975, and passim in our other reports.)

3.22. Other-initiations use a group of turn-constructural devices to initiate repair.¹⁴ One type is *Huh, What?*:

- (25) D: Wul did'e ever get married 'r anything?
C: → Hu:h?
D: Did jee ever get married?
C: I have // no idea. [CD:SP]
- (26) A: Were you uh you were in therapy with a private doctor?
B: yah
A: Have you ever tried a clinic?
B: → What?
A: Have you ever tried a clinic?
B: ((sigh)) No, I don't want to go to a clinic. [NYE:2]
- (27) B: Oh, I was just gonna say come out and come over here and talk this
evening, but if you're going out // you can't very well do that
C: 'Talk', you mean get drunk don't you.
B: → What?
C: It's Saturday. [JJ:1]
- (Cf. also, e.g., 16 above.)

Another type consists of the question words *who, where, when*:

- (28) B: Oh Sibbie's sistuh hadda ba:by bo:way.
A: → Who?
B: Sibbie's sister.
A: Oh really?
B: Myeah,
A: (That's nice.) [TG:27]
- (29) F: This is nice, did you make this?
K: No, Samu made that.

¹³ This is not to say that any occurrence of any one of these is engaged in repair initiation. Turn-terminal words, e.g., frequently contain a sound stretch.

¹⁴ Cf. Sacks et al. (1974:702-3, 720-23, et passim).

- F: → Who?
 K: Samu. [KC-4:3-4]
 (30) B: By the way, I haveta go ta Lila's.
 A: → Where?
 B: Lila's ta get () [BM:FN]
 (31) J: Tsk there's Mako:(hh)
 C: → Where,
 J: There, [C-J:12]
 (32) S: That's all. But you know what happened that night we went to camp.
 Forget it. She wouldn't behave for anything.
 A: → W-when?
 S: When we went to camp.
 A: She behaved okay.
 S: She did?
 A. Yeah. She could've been a lot worse. [On the Make:21-26]

Another is partial repeat of the trouble-source turn, plus a question word:

- (33) Sue: Yeah we used to live, on the highway, too. And when we first moved
 up there, it was terrible sleeping because all these semis were going
 by at night.
 ((short silence))
 Bob: → All the what?
 Sue: Semis.
 Bob: Oh [BH:1A:14]
 (34) A: Well who'r you workin for.
 B: 'hhh Well I'm working through the Amfat Corporation.
 A: → The *who*?
 B: Amfah Corpora//tion. T's a holding company.
 A: Oh
 A: Yeah [C & D:9]
 (35) Bea: Was last night the first time you met Missiz Kelly?
 (1.0)
 Marge: → Met whom?
 Bea: Missiz Kelly,
 Marge: Yes. [SBL:2:1:8:5]
 (36) A: ... See I could ask you what you did at your party Saturday night.
 B: I didn't go to a party Saturday night.
 A: I thought you had a date with your boyfriend to go to a party.
 B: No I went to a shower.
 A: → To a where?
 B: I went to a shower. [Carterette & Jones 1974:418]

Another is partial repeat of the trouble-source turn:

- (37) A: Well Monday, lemme think. Monday, Wednesday, an' Fridays I'm
 home by one ten.
 B: → One ten?
 A: Two o'clock. My class ends one ten. [TG:15-16]
 (38) A: What're you guys doin at the beach.
 B: Nothin
 A: → Nothe::://n
 B: No:;, [NB:68:1:3]
 A: Oh, good // heavens

A final type is *Y' mean* plus a possible understanding of prior turn:

- (39) A: Why did I turn out this way.
 B: → You mean homosexual?
 A: Yes. [SPC: SP]
 (Cf. also 65 and 68 below.)

There are, of course, additional construction types for other-initiation.¹⁵

3.3. The COURSES or TRAJECTORIES from initiation to repair solution, engendered by self- and other-initiations from their respective positions with their respective initiation techniques, are regular within each type ('self' and 'other'), and are different from one another. That is: most self-initiated repairs are initiated in the turn which contains the trouble source; and, of those, the vast majority are accomplished successfully within the same turn (cf. the data cited which include self-initiated repair; e.g. 1-5, 11, 17, 23, and 24.) Those initiated in transition space and third turn also are overwhelmingly successful within the turn in which they are initiated. Most repairs initiated by any other party in next turn take multiple turns (i.e. more than the next turn in which they are initiated) to get accomplished (cf. the data cited which include other-initiated repair, e.g. 12, 25-39, and see §5.2 below.)

¹⁵ The construction types for other-initiation of repair are not presented in the text in a random order. They have a natural ordering, based on their relative 'strength' or 'power' on such parameters as their capacity to 'locate' a repairable. The natural ordering is realized empirically in several facts. For instance, there is a preference for stronger over weaker initiators, such that weaker ones get self-interrupted in mid-production to be replaced by stronger ones:

- (a) B: How long y'gonna be here?
 A: Uh- not too long. Uh just til uh Monday.
 B: → Til- oh yih mean like a week f'm tomorrow.
 A: Yah. [DA:2]

Or, if more than one other-initiated sequence is needed, the other-initiators are used in order of increasing strength:

- (b) A: I have a: — cousin teaches there.
 D: Where.
 A: Uh:, Columbia.
 D: → Columbia?
 A: Uh huh.
 D: → You mean Manhattan?
 A: No. Uh big university. Isn't that in Columbia?
 D: Oh in Columbia.
 A: Yeah. [HS:FN]
 (Cf. also 65, and (d) below.)

Other construction types not enumerated in the text would fit into the ordering. For example: note that the 'question words' in §3.22 all locate types of referents actually referred to in prior turn. There is a separate class of other initiators—in large measure using an overlapping set of lexical items—which locate as repairables referents which were not actually components of prior turn:

- (c) Ben: They gotta- a garage sale.
 Ellen: → Where.
 Ben: On Third Avenoo. [Schenkein:70:38]
 (d) Ava: I wanted t'know if ya got a uhm whatchamacallit uhm p(hh)ark(hh)ing
 place this morning.
 Bee: A parking place.
 Ava: Mm hm
 Bee: → Where.
 Ava: Oh hh just anyplace heh heh I was just kidding ya. [TG:1]

The latter class is differently graded than the former, being 'stronger'. We will report more fully on this whole area in another paper.

4.12. Repairs on person references are initiated from the same four positions (same turn, transition space, next turn, and third turn), as shown respectively in examples 45–47, 48, 49–50, and 51:

- (45) L: ... and uhn I don't know where we're
going, I really don't think there's much
→ more they- y'know anybody here c'n do for me. [GTS:3:6]
- (46) A: → And Bill- an' Bud got do:wn.
B: 'hhh yes. [NB:IV:8:3]
- (47) K: Well y'know a diagnosis like that is:
hardly (1.0) the end of the process,
→ y'know. I- I mean th- he- they, y'know
→ the guy- the th' pathologist looks at
the tissue in the microscope, y'know,
an he comes up with a label, 'n he gives
it a label, but then, what that is really
or what to do about it or what the prognosis is,
→ 'hh requires ah the experience of somebody
→ y'know some other type of doctor. [KC-4:14]
- (48) A: ... well I was the only one other than
→ the uhm tch Snows // uh Mrs. Randolph Snow?
B: ()
B: (uh huh) [SBL:2:2:4:16]
- (49) Vic: → First of a:::ll, uh Michael, came by;
I tell you-
(0.5)
Vic: Tch!
James: → [Who's Michael.
Vic: [Picture the story.
Mike: M//e.
Vic: Michael came by. Michael ... [US:33]
- (50) Ken: B't I d'know- it seems thet- when Roger en I
→ came in I d- I d'know if it wz u:s er what. B't
we- the group seem' tuh disba:nd af//ter we got here.]
Roger: → U:s? it wz me:] hheh 'hh hhh 'hh
(Note also the same-turn person reference repair
at the end of Ken's turn '... we- the group ...') [GTS:5:9:r]
- (51) A: Yeah. Well I should've known about
→ E-Ellen's bidding, the way she did over there
just the four // of us. Y'know.
B: Yeah
B: Uh huh
A: An uh an each ti- eh boy did I hesitate,
but I thought now she knows uh the
Goren rules, // an when you say "two"
it's a cut-off, an' sh- an' uh so uh —
→ I mean E|va. I thought. So I can I
can't under- I still can't under//stand.
B: Yeah.
B: Yeah. [SBL:2:2:3:45]

4.13. Repairs of next-speaker selections are also initiated from each of these positions, as shown respectively by examples 52–53, 54, 55–56, and 57:

- (52) Dot: → Yer gettin s- look how // thin he's gettin. [Travel Agency:11]
(53) Mike: → Sh'd I jist s- eh- Jim.

- Jim: [Huh?
Mike: [Sh'd I j's send it or uh:::
(0.3)
Jim: Send it. [US:49:r]
(Cf. also Schegloff 1968:1081.)
- (54) Ken: Hey why didn' you show up last week.
→ Either of you two. [GTS:4:1]
- (55) Loren: Uhm::, will somebody pass the paperbacks- (1.0) An:d: the ()
Cathy: → Is that somebody me?
Loren: Mm hmm [Bookstore:SP]
- (56) Louise: D'you go tuh therapy,
(1.4)
Dan: → Do I?
(0.3)
Louise: Mm hm? [GTS:1:2:37]
(Cf. also Sacks et al., p. 723, fn.)
- (57) Sam: Would the bartender or the cook put 'n apron on 'r sum'n I- we-
how're we gonna know who's who.
(1.0)
Jim: I tried tuh call you by the way.
E: Yea//:h?
Jim: I think ih wz Thursday, you weren' in.
E: Thurs//dee?
Joe: No. (1.0) She w'z // gone
Jim: → No. Sam. I taw- I talked to you on Thursday.
(1.0)
Sam: [Me?
Jim: [I tried tuh talk tuh Sam on Thursday but he wasn' // home.
[Schenkein:II:25]
- (Also note the next-turn speaker-selection repair initiation at Sam's second turn 'Me?')

Self- and other-initiated repairs, then, deal with same sorts of repairables.

4.2. The placements of self-initiation and other-initiation are organized by reference to each other. They are positioned successively (i.e., they occupy adjacent turns); and they are ordered, alternating turn-by-turn between positions for self- and other-initiation, with positions for self-initiation preceding those for other-initiation. Since the set of positions operates for same sorts of repairables, and thus potentially for some same particular repairable,¹⁷ the different positions invite

¹⁷ It does not necessarily follow, from the fact that the set of positions operates for same SORTS of repairables, that they all operate on some PARTICULAR repairable, i.e. that any particular repairable can have repair initiated on it from any of the positions. It is, however, empirically the case. That is most conveniently shown by instances in which some particular repairable, having had repair initiated in one position and a candidate solution achieved, has repair re-initiated on it at another position. Thus, in fragment (d) of fn. 15, *parking place* is first the target of a same-turn word-search repair, and then of a next-turn repair; and in 44, the place being referred to is self-repaired in third turn and then other-repaired in next turn. Also, repair may be initiated simultaneously or overlappingly by self and other, and thereby in different positions:

- Prisc: Okay.
Marj: Okay then seeyuh- Wednesday.=
Prisc: = Ya:h,=
Marj: = Ya//h.

treatment as involving a serial ordering of opportunities to repair SOME SAME potential repairable. These are all aspects of an ordering of the positions for self- and other-initiation relative to each other. However, such an ordering could be a by-product of an organization of those positions relative to the trouble source. What we want to show is that the positions are not only ORDERED relative to each other, but that that ordering is ORGANIZATIONALLY DESIGNED, i.e. is the product of an organization that relates the positions to each other—not just to the trouble source, with a relation to each other as by-product.

Such an organization is most usefully explicated in the positioning of other-initiation relative to the trouble-source turn. We noted earlier (§4.1) that other-initiations occupy one main position: next turn. This distribution is organizationally achieved. The observation about the occurrence of other-initiation in next-turn position has dual import. First, out of the multiplicity of later turns by others that follow a potential repairable, very nearly all other-initiations come in just one of them, namely next turn, AND NOT IN LATER TURNS BY OTHER(S). Second, other-initiations DO NOT COME EARLIER. Although trouble-source turns are often interrupted for the initiation of repair, such interruptions are overwhelmingly self-interruptions by the speaker of the trouble-source turn for the self-initiation of repair, and are rarely interruptions by other-initiation. Rather, others ‘withhold’ repair initiations from placement while trouble-source turn is in progress,¹⁸ e.g. in the following fragment (from Jefferson 1972).

- (58) ((Three children playing water tag; Steven has been tagged, and is now ‘It’))
- Steven: One, two, three, ((pause)) four five
→ six, ((pause)) eleven eight nine ten.
- Susan: → Eleven? eight, nine, ten?
- Steven: → Eleven, eight, nine, ten.
- Nancy: → Eleven?
- Steven: Seven, eight, nine, ten.
- Susan: That’s better.
- ((Game continues)) [GJ:FN]
- (Cf. also 62–63 below.¹⁹)

Here the other-initiator clearly has an initiation technique (not to mention a correction) available on the occurrence of the repairable, but does not employ it until the trouble-source turn has come to completion.

Prisc: → (Tha-) No // not (Wens)]

Marj: → No Thur]sday.

(0.2)

Prisc: Euh allright // (dear),

[Trio:2:II:6]

¹⁸ On ‘withholding’, cf. Jefferson (1973:61–70).

¹⁹ Consider also the following from Charles Dickens, *Bleak house* (Everyman’s edition), p. 6 (emphasis supplied):

‘In reference,’ proceeds the Chancellor, still on Jarndyce and Jarndyce, ‘to the young GIRL—’

‘Begludships pardon—BOY,’ says Mister Tangle, PREMATURELY.

‘In reference,’ proceeds the Chancellor, with extra distinctness, ‘to the young girl and boy, the two young people,’ (Mr. Tangle crushed) ...

Indeed, other-initiations regularly are withheld a bit PAST the possible completion of trouble-source turn; not only does a withhold get them specifically positioned in next turn, but it can get 'next turn' itself delayed a bit. In such cases, other-initiations occur after a slight gap, the gap evidencing a withhold beyond the completion of trouble-source turn—providing an 'extra' opportunity, in an expanded transition space, for speaker of trouble source to self-initiate repair (cf. 12, 43, 49).²⁰ Such opportunities are taken with some regularity, yielding data in which a slight gap after turn completion is followed by transition-space self-initiation, with no other-initiation at all (as in 60 below). Such data should be appreciated as evidence on the withholding of other-initiation, even though no other-initiation occurs in them. By means of the extended withhold, their occurrence is sometimes avoided entirely (a device having evidentiary bearing on a preference, which cannot be discussed here, for self- over other-initiation of repair).

The nearly invariable withhold of other-initiation until trouble-source turn's possible completion, with the frequent withhold for a bit after that possible completion, is an organized positioning of other-initiation relative not only to trouble source but also relative to same-turn post-trouble-source positions for self-initiation, and to transition-space position for self-initiation. It provides clear evidence that self- and other-initiation are related TO EACH OTHER, that the relatedness is ORGANIZED, and that the organization is in REPAIR-SPECIFIC TERMS.

4.3. We declared an interest above (§1 and fn. 5), informing our work on repair, in finding and describing an organization, operative in local environments and on a case-by-case basis, which cumulatively produced the aggregate orderliness of repair phenomena. Enough elements of such an organization have been introduced in passing, in the preceding discussion, to make it useful to restate them more pointedly and elaborate them slightly, although we cannot undertake a full account of that organization here. We begin by making explicit an analytic shift that has already been tacitly employed in the preceding paragraphs.

Having found that, for the types of repair considered (and for others that we know of), repair can be initiated from any of the four positions we have referred to, we note: each of the positions at which repair DOES get initiated is a position at which repair CAN get initiated. Each provides a 'repair-initiation OPPORTUNITY'. It is central to the understanding of the withholding of 'other-initiation' that it is withheld in order to allow speaker of a repairable the use of an opportunity, or set

²⁰ The post-gap other-initiations are important on another point as well. It might be thought that the infrequency of interruptions by 'others' to initiate repair is a consequence of the turn-taking organization and of the right it gives current speaker to speak to possible completion, including repair. To be sure, the turn-taking organization is relevant, and the compatibility of the organization of repair with it is a fact of considerable importance. But as noted in Sacks et al., slight overlap of current turn's completion by next turn's start is not infrequent and has various systematic bases; but when 'next turn' is occupied with other-initiation of repair, it rarely overlaps prior turn. Furthermore, the turn-taking system is organized so as to minimize not only overlap but gap as well; that the 'withholding' of other-initiation has a repair-specific basis separate from, and sometimes superseding, turn-taking may be seen in the 'withhold to allow self-initiation' which yields a gap after the trouble-source turn. This is only one of many evidences of the independent status of the repair organization, whose operation may supersede otherwise operative aspects of the turn-taking organization.

of opportunities, to initiate repair himself. It should be appreciated, then, that such an opportunity attended that speaker's turn, whether or not it was taken. Thus all the data provided in this paper on next-turn repair initiation should be understood as showing, as well, opportunities NOT TAKEN for same turn and transition-space repair initiation. And the data presented on third-turn repair initiation display instances in which opportunities for same-turn and transition-space initiation of repair were not taken by speaker of repairable, and in which opportunities for next-turn repair initiation were not taken by 'others'. It should, then, finally be appreciated that in instances in which there is no third-turn repair either—in which, then, no repair is initiated at any of these positions, and thus almost invariably no repair is initiated at all—that a potential repairable (and recall §2.1, where it was noted that nothing seems to be excludable from that class) has nonetheless been attended by the full complement of repair-initiation opportunities, none of which happens to have been taken. (Thus our earlier finding that even the 'ripest' of repairables, i.e. 'errors', are not necessarily followed by repair.) The organization of self- and other-initiation is, then, fundamentally located in the organization of repair-initiation OPPORTUNITY POSITIONS; this operates whether or not any repair is initiated, by self or other. The 'repair space' through which a repairable passes is, then, to be understood as a 'repair-initiation OPPORTUNITY space', some of whose characteristics we here briefly repeat, leaving a more elaborate treatment for discussion elsewhere.

The 'repair-initiation opportunity space' is continuous and discretely bounded, composed of initiation-opportunity positions at least some of which are discretely bounded.²¹ The positions are adjacent, each being directly succeeded by a next, some being themselves composed internally of a set of 'sub-positions'. The space is three turns long,²² starting from (i.e. including) the trouble-source turn. Nearly all repairables on which repair is initiated have the repair initiated from within this space.²³ As ought to be clear from the earlier discussion, the organization of the repair space is compatible with an organizational preference for self-initiation over other-initiation of repair (a preference distinct from the preference for self-repair)—a preference which the empirical preponderance of self- over other-initiations suggests to be indeed operative.²⁴ A more detailed discussion of the repair-initiation opportunity space and of the preference for self-initiation of repair is reserved for another occasion.

5. PREFERENCE FOR SELF-CORRECTION. We have added to the distinction with which we began, between self- and other-correction, a distinction between self- and other-INITIATION OF REPAIR; we have found the latter distinction to catch a

²¹ The discussion of 'withholding of other-initiation' shows the discrete boundedness of 'same turn'. The necessary research on this matter for the other positions is still incomplete.

²² A paper on the opportunity space will justify the turn metric employed here. That turns are the relevant units is somewhat evidenced in the text above.

²³ Recall the observation in §§2 and 4 that not all errors yield repair. The same holds true for the more general category of 'repairable'—more general, it will be recalled, because it appears that nothing is, in principle, excludable from that class.

²⁴ Various of the points above speak to this preference, e.g., the extended withhold of other-initiation, in which a late self-initiation regularly occurs.

set of empirical types, and have found those types and their structured opportunity positions to be organizationally related. We now return to our initial hypothesis and the gross evidence for it; i.e., as between self- and other-CORRECTION, we should expect a social-organizational preference for self- over other-correction, a preference exhibited empirically by the preponderance of self- over other-correction. How is this preponderance produced?

5.1. The following points were noted earlier: (i) opportunities for self-initiation come before opportunities for other-initiation (cf. §4.2); (ii) massively, for those repairables on which repair is initiated, same-turn and transition-space opportunities for self-initiation ARE TAKEN by speakers of the trouble source (cf. §4.2); (iii) the course or trajectory of same-turn initiated repairs regularly leads to successful self-repair in same turn, i.e. before the position for other-initiation (cf. §3.3).

This combination of facts, by itself, would account for a skewed distribution of corrections toward self-correction.

5.2. Furthermore, in the case of those repairables on which repair is initiated, but not in same turn or transition space, OTHER-INITIATIONS OVERWHELMINGLY YIELD SELF-CORRECTIONS. In the techniques employed for other-initiation of repair, we find a further basis for the empirical preponderance of self-correction, as well as decisive evidence that this preponderance is organizationally designed—the product of a preference for self-correction, independent of the preference for self-initiation.

We noted in §3.2 above that the techniques for self- and other-initiation were different. It is now in point to elaborate one aspect of their difference.

5.21. Same-turn and transition-space self-initiations/self-repairs can, and overwhelmingly do, combine the operations of locating the repairable and doing a candidate repair. To be sure, these two operations can be separated in same-turn repair:

- (59) B: → nYeeah, 'hh This feller I have- (nn)
 → 'felluh'; this ma:n (0.2) t!'hhh He ha::(s)- uff- eh- who- who I
 have fer Linguistics // is really too much. [TG:8]

Or the 'not X, Y' format may be used, in which the 'not X' component locates the repairable, and the 'Y' component supplies a candidate repair:

- (60) A: → That sto:re, has terra cotta floors. ((pause))
 A: → Not terra cotta. Terrazzo. [AT:FN]
 (61) Louise: Isn't it next week we're outta school?
 Roger: → Yeah next week. No // not next
 → week, // the week after. [GTS:1:28]

In the vast majority of cases, however (cf. any of the same-turn repairs we have cited), the trouble-locating is compacted into the repair-candidate itself, both being done by a single component, and being done in the same turn as the trouble source. (The repair initiator, it will be recalled, is a non-lexical perturbation in same-turn repair, and neither locates repairable nor supplies repair.) The basic format for same-turn repair is, then, self-initiation with a non-lexical initiator followed by candidate repair.²⁵

²⁵ Cf. Jefferson (1975:186).

5.22. The format for other-initiated repair is different. The different initiator technique mentioned earlier (§3.2) engenders a different trajectory (§3.3), which results in other-initiation yielding self-repair in a next turn. For, in other-initiation, the operations of locating the repairable and supplying a candidate repair are separated. THE TECHNIQUES FOR OTHER-INITIATION ARE TECHNIQUES FOR LOCATING THE TROUBLE SOURCE. The turn which affords others an opportunity for initiating repair is thus used to locate the trouble source; such turns are massively occupied with nothing else. They are used, then, to provide speaker of the trouble source ANOTHER opportunity, in the turn that follows them, to repair the trouble source. They are used this way even when 'other' clearly 'knows' the repair or 'correction', and COULD use the turn to do it:

- (62) Ken: 'E likes that waider over there,
 Al: → Wait-er?
 Ken: Waitress, sorry,
 Al: 'At's bedder, [GTS:II:2:54]
- (63) A: It's just about three o'clock, so she's probably free. I'll call her now.
 B: → What time is it?
 A: Three, isn't it?
 B: → I thought it was earlier.
 A: Oh, two. Sorry. [SPC:SP]
 (Cf. also 58 above.)

Thus other-initiated repair takes a multiple of turns—at least two: in the first of these, the other-initiator locates the trouble; in the second, the speaker of the trouble source essays a repair (self-correction).²⁶

5.3. In sum: SELF-INITIATED REPAIRS YIELD SELF-CORRECTION, and opportunities for self-initiation come first. OTHER-INITIATED REPAIRS ALSO YIELD SELF-CORRECTION; the opportunity available to other to initiate repair is used to afford speaker of a trouble source a further opportunity to self-repair, which he takes. This combination compels the conclusion that, although there is a distinction between self-correction and other-correction, SELF-CORRECTION AND OTHER-CORRECTION ARE NOT ALTERNATIVES. Rather, the organization of repair in conversation provides centrally for self-correction, which can be arrived at by the alternative routes of self-initiation and other-initiation—routes which are themselves so organized as to favor self-initiated self-repair.

²⁶ These two turns, and the further turns that may be engendered if the first other-initiated repair sequence is not successful, turn out to display adjacency-pair organization, as we will discuss in detail elsewhere. On adjacency-pair organization, cf. Schegloff & Sacks (1973:295–9); Sacks et al. (1974:716–18).

There is, of course, the alternative, in the turn following the other-initiation turn, of confirming or re-asserting the original version of the trouble-source:

- (a) Crandall: ... they talk about the president as a teacher.
 Caller: → At- As a teacher?
 Crandall: → Yes.
 Caller: Uh hu:h, [Crandall:2–22:20]
- (b) A: Why don't you want to tell it to me.
 B: I don't know why.
 A: → You don't know?
 B: → No I don't. I'm sorry. [SPC:92]

6. SOME OBSERVATIONS ON OTHER-CORRECTION. The preceding discussion has provided an organizational basis for a strongly skewed distribution of correction in the direction of self-correction, a skewing which is empirically found in conversational data. In view of the substantial constraints operating to restrict the occurrence of other-correction, the small number of other-corrections which DO occur invite special attention. Several observations may be offered.

6.1. When other-corrections are done, they are frequently modulated in form. Several forms of modulation may be mentioned.

6.11. The other-correction may be downgraded on a 'confidence/uncertainty' scale, e.g. by the affiliation to the correction of uncertainty markers, or by use of various types of question format:

- (64) Ben: Lissena pigeons.
(0.7)
Ellen: → [Coo-coo::: coo:::
Bill: → [Quail, I think.
Ben: Oh yeh?
(1.5)
Ben: No that's not quail, that's a pigeon, [JS:II:219-20]

One particularly common modulation form is *Y'mean X?* where *X* is a possible correction or replacement word:

- (65) Lori: But y'know single beds'r awfully thin tuh sleep on.
Sam: What?
Lori: Single beds. // They're-
Ellen: → Y'mean narrow?
Lori: They're awfully narrow // yeah. [JS:II:97]

6.12. Some 'other-corrections' are jokes; i.e., they are done jokingly, or turn out to be jokes, and not seriously-proposed corrections:

- (66) Louise: We gotta nice large table fer her an' 'er husban'
→ t'demonstrate.
(1.7)
(): hmm:::hh
(0.8)
Louise: 'Ere was a cartoon where they had, uhm think i'was in Playboy,
(0.6) where they had 'n- you know, s:ex 'n hygiene,
(0.9)
Roger: → Not demonstrate, indulge .hhheh hh//hh [GTS:I:2:56]
(67) L: Holiday, quote unquote, huh huh
Lo: Hn hn // hn
C: A(hh)re you ki(hh)dding?
(2.0)
L: (Memorial Day's a non-work day.)
J: That's- that's right. =
Lo: = huh huh!
J: → Stay home and pine about work.
Lo: huh huh huh huh huh huh huh uh huh.
L: → Not about work, about money,
Lo: huh huh huh! [BSII:2:151]

6.2. As noted above, the *Y'mean X?* form may be used to modulate an other-correction. But it may be used, quite apart from that, to check understanding, i.e. for a check by recipient-of-a-turn of his understanding of the turn—as can forms other than *Y'mean X?*. E.g.,

- (68) B: ... I was thinkin this morning, I was having a little trouble in the bathroom, an' I thought 'Oh, boy, I- n- I- uh- uh this business of getting up at six o'clock'n being ready t' eat, is uh- is not fer me,' // heh heh
- A: Uh huh
- A: Well, uh th- ((clears throat))
- B: Somehow you // endure it.
- A: There's 'n- There's 'n answer to that too.
(2.0)
- A: hhhh a physical answer t(hh)oo hhh
- B: → You mean takin laxative at night.
- A: No, suppositories. [SBL:2:1:8:2]
- (69) Roger: En yer the only ones that survive (h)after the cra::sh, ihh=
(): =()
- Ken: Four months onna deserted island he:hh hhhh
(0.4)
- (Roger): Aaa:h.=
- Ken: = 'hi::hh.
(0.2)
- Jim: Go//t some imagination don't]yuh.hheh
- Ken: Home made abo(h)rtion.]
- (Dan): (//)
- Roger: Wha://t?
- Jim: ((clears throat))
(0.2)
- Jim: Some imagination.
(0.5)
- Roger: → Who:se.mi:ne?
- Jim: No hi:s.
- Roger: hhhh 'hh hh 'hh [GTS:5:13:r]

Note that, in *Y'mean* and uncertainty-marked modulations, as well as in understanding checks, other-correction (and the 'checked understanding') is not asserted, but is proffered for acceptance or rejection. The format employed is that of a guess, candidate, or 'try' in what we have elsewhere called a 'correction invitation format'.²⁷

These forms supply the most accommodating environment for UNMODULATED OTHER-CORRECTION. Of the unmodulated other-corrections which DO occur, a very large proportion occur in the turn after an understanding check or a modulated other-correction, e.g. of the form *You mean X?* They take the form *No* plus correction (see, e.g., 64, 68, and 69 above, the turns following the arrowed turns). It should be noted that these unmodulated other-corrections, in view of their occurrence after understanding checks, etc., in typically question and correction-invitation format, are (either) invited, and/or reject a modulated other-correction in prior turn. The import of the last points is that most of the other-correction which does occur is either specially marked or specially positioned; both types exhibit an orientation to its dispreferred status.

6.3. As the data cited on them should suggest, other-initiations of repair locate problems of hearing and/or understanding as 'obstacles' to the production of what would otherwise occupy the sequential position in which they are placed—an

²⁷ Cf. Sacks & Schegloff 1977.

appropriate 'next turn' sequentially implicated by prior turn. Other-initiations of repair undertake to have such 'obstacles' removed in the service of the production of a sequentially implicated next. When the hearing/understanding of a turn is adequate to the production of a correction by 'other', it is adequate to allow production of a sequentially appropriate next turn. Under that circumstance, the turn's recipient ('other') should produce the next turn, not the correction (and, overwhelmingly, that is what is done). Therein lies another basis for the empirical paucity of other-corrections: those who could do them do a sequentially appropriate next turn instead. Therein, as well, lies the basis for the modulation—in particular, the 'uncertainty marking'—of other-correction: if it were confidently held, it ought not to be done; only if unsurely held ought it to displace the sequentially implicated next turn. Therein, finally, is a basis for much of the other-correction which does occur being treated by its recipient on its occurrence, as involving more than correction, i.e. disagreement.²⁸

6.4. We have so far in this section offered three types of observation on the occurrence of other-correction, in view of the structural constraints operating to restrict it: (i) about the form it takes, e.g. modulation; (ii) about its local sequential environment, e.g. just after modulated other-corrections and understanding checks; and (iii) about its sequential implications upon its occurrence, e.g. its treatment as disagreement.

Such observations are possible and in point because, unlike other-initiation of repair—which, in its proper position (next turn) is unrestricted in its privilege of occurrence—other-correction is highly constrained in its occurrence. It is likely that other environments can be located in which other-correction does occur. For example, one sequence-type environment in which other-correction is used, in a manner which exploits its potential relationship to disagreement, is the story-telling sequence in conversation. There, an 'as-of-some-point-non-teller' of a story starting to be told, or in progress, may use other-correction of the teller as a bid, or subsequently as a vehicle, for being a co-teller of the story—making, with the initial teller, a 'team'. Once noted as an environment for other-correction, the 'team' relationship of two parties may be further explored in other sequential environments for the presence of other-correction. Still, the investigation of such particular and restricted environments is indicative of the generally constrained occurrence of other-correction.

6.5. We want to note one apparent exception to the highly constrained occurrence of other-correction, with the reservation that we note it not on the basis of extensive taped and transcribed conversational materials, but on the basis of passing ob-

²⁸ 'Disagreement', used here in a technical sense, names a vast and elaborate aspect of the organization of sequences in conversation, partially overlapping with the organization of preference and dispreference, occasionally mentioned in the text, and commented on in fn. 4 above. The organization of repair is intricately involved with that of agreement/disagreement and preference/dispreference. Aside from the convergence mentioned in the text between other-correction and disagreement, e.g., other forms of other-initiated repair are systematically related to 'disagreement', regularly being used and understood as 'pre-disagreements'. The organization of agreement/disagreement and preference/dispreference is too complex to be entered into here. Its operation in one domain is illuminated by Pomerantz.

ervation, plus some inspection of a limited amount of taped and transcribed data.²⁹ The exception is most apparent in the domain of adult-child interaction, in particular parent-child interaction; but it may well be more generally relevant to the not-yet-competent in some domain without respect to age. There, other-correction seems to be not as infrequent, and appears to be one vehicle for socialization. If that is so, then it appears that other-correction is not so much an alternative to self-correction in conversation in general, but rather a device for dealing with those who are still learning or being taught to operate with a system which requires, for its routine operation, that they be adequate self-monitors and self-correctors as a condition of competence. It is, in that sense, only a transitional usage, whose supersession by self-correction is continuously awaited.

7. 'REPAIR' AS A PHENOMENON FOR LINGUISTICS AND SOCIOLOGY. In the recent history of linguistics, across the various changes in theoretical position and tenor it has experienced, the phenomena of correction—or, more generally, repair—have been largely ignored,³⁰ in spite of their massive occurrence in the overwhelmingly most common use of language—conversation. This is not another complaint against this or that theoretical school or style of analysis; 'structural linguistics' did not give repair that much more attention than transformationalists have given it. When the relevance of the general domain HAS been appreciated, it has been 'error' rather than repair which has been treated as the central phenomenon of interest.³¹

However, the organization of repair is the self-righting mechanism for the organization of language use in social interaction. If language is composed of systems of rules which are integrated, then it will have sources of trouble related to the modes of their integration (at the least). And if it has intrinsic sources of trouble, then it will have a mechanism for dealing with them intrinsically. An adequate theory of the organization of natural language will need to depict how a natural language handles its intrinsic troubles. Such a theory will, then, need an account of the organization of repair.

Finally, since language is a vehicle for the living of real lives with real interests in a real world, it should be appreciated that an interest in available mechanisms for handling the troubles of rule-system integration, among others, is not only (or primarily) a theoretician's interest. Not only language integration, but also social organization, require an organization of repair. Here, at the organization of repair—though not exclusively here—linguistics and sociology meet.

²⁹ Use of taped and transcribed material is of two sorts: (a) inspection of materials in our corpus where a child is present, and (b) an initial, unsystematic reading of material collected by Roger Brown, whom we thank for having made it available to us.

³⁰ There are exceptions, of course, and we have cited some of the published work elsewhere in this paper. We should note as well the work of Labov (cf., e.g., 1970:42); his suggestion that a few 'editing rules' would bring most spoken sentences into conformity with the formats described by students of syntax encouraged and reinforced our own belief that there was sufficient orderliness in this area to permit successful investigation.

³¹ Cf. the collection edited by Fromkin (1973); but note the occasional interest expressed in 'correction' or 'editing', e.g. in the papers by Fry, Hockett, and Laver.

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