

**EFFECTS OF CONVERSATION REPAIR STRATEGIES ON COUNSELLING  
DISCOURSE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KAKAMEGA CENTRAL  
SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

**BY**

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**DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS**

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## DECLARATION

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## **DEDICATON**

I dedicate this work to the Almighty God. Without His grace, this academic endeavour would not have come to fruition given the circumstances.

## ABSTRACT

Guidance and counselling programmes in high schools in Kenya are communicative events organised in group or individual sessions to remedy social or academic issues affecting students. Particular breakdowns often arise in such conversation settings due to their informal nature and turn control necessitating conversation repair among the participants. It is therefore, imperative to study the conversational nature of guidance and counselling discourse so as to identify inconsistencies that may lead to breakdown and misunderstanding and also the effects of the repair strategies used to address them. With regard to conversation repair, existing literature has mainly focused on a one-on-one conversation and classroom setting and not on a highly interactive group counselling sessions. This study, therefore, sought to examine effects of conversation repair strategies employed by teacher-counsellors and student-counselees during group guidance and counselling sessions in selected secondary schools within Kakamega Central Sub-County. The specific objectives were: to examine the discourse units that signal conversation breakdown, to describe the conversation repair strategies employed by interlocutors and to examine the effect of these conversation repair strategies employed by counsellors and counselees on counselling discourse. The study was premised on the conversation analysis theory (CA) developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s by Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson. CA is designed to investigate norms and conventions that speakers use in interactions to establish communicative understanding. Analytical research design was adopted for this study. The study population was forty- three group counselling sessions that were held within a period of five months in eight public and private high schools within Kakamega Central Sub-County. Thirteen group guidance and counselling sessions representing thirty percent of the target population were purposively sampled and used in the study. Participants in the guidance and counselling sessions were teacher-counsellors and students. Data was collected through audio recordings, note taking and observation schedules. An interview guide was also used to gather information through a face-to-face interview with teacher-counsellors. Data collected were analysed using mixed method along thematic lines. However, the analysis was skewed towards qualitative method. Conversation Analysis procedure and the typology of conversational repair strategies set out by Kenworthy (1984) were also employed in data analysis. Data collected were presented in prose. The study findings revealed that syntactic and prosodic units signalled conversation breakdown. The results revealed that preference was given to other-initiation, self-repair and other-repair. The study also found that sometimes, there can be multiple occurrences of trouble sources, repair initiations and repairs within a transaction. Further, it was established that conversational repair strategies influenced the flow of the discourse. The study concludes that group guidance and counselling is important with regard to recognizing and repairing broken segments in conversations. The research recommends that counsellors should monitor the flow of conversations, besides participants should use comprehensible language during the counselling discourse. Finally, there is need to equip teacher-counsellors with linguistic skills of identifying and repairing breakdowns in guidance and counselling discourse. It is hoped that findings of this study may contribute to the body of knowledge in conversation repair in specific contexts such as discourse analysis, conversational analysis and therapeutic sessions.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Conversation Analysis
FPP	First pair part
IUs	Interactional Units
MDU	Minimal discourse units
NNS	Non-native speaker
NS	Native speaker
OIOR	Other initiated other repair
OISR	Other initiated self repair
OR	Other repetition
R	Repair
RC	Repair confirmation
RI	Repair Initiation
SIOR	Self initiated other repair
SPP	Second pair part
ST	Student
TC	Teacher- Counsellor
TCU	Turn construction unit
TRP	Transition relevant places
TS	Trouble source

## LIST OF TRANSCRIPTION SYMBOLS USED

Transcription element	Meaning
↑	Marks rise in intonation
↓	Marks a fall in intonation
CAPITALS	Marks speech that is louder than surrounding speech
<u>Underlining</u>	Indicates emphasis
(.)	Indicates a micro-pause
((comment))	Analyst's comment about something going on in the conversation
[ ]	Indicates interruption
(h)	Indicates laughter within speech

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

The core functions of human communication systems are communicating as well as conversation. Scholars have described conversation differently. However, many of them agree that conversation is a linguistic exchange, a basic form of communication, a vehicle through which selves, relationships and situations are talked into being and the key to revealing competence and being viewed as a social being (Crystal, 1987; Kagan, 1995; Schiffrin, 1988). Conversation is clearly a joint responsibility that has a dual nature, being a vehicle for, first, exchange of information and, second, social interaction. The ability to communicate through conversation is central to social life, and social interaction provides a powerful means for defining self, achieving self esteem and maintaining relationships with others (Schegloff, 1992). Ordinary conversation is characterized by breakdowns and repairs in order to ensure the flow of the conversation. A successful conversation is one in which participants interact with each other, provide adequate and unambiguous information and identify and resolve breakdowns as they occur in conversations. The ability to identify and repair breakdowns is defined as conversational repair.

Breakdowns usually lead to departures from the subjects of or flow of conversations. For example, McRoy and Hirst (1995) describe misunderstanding, which is a manifestation of conversation breakdown, as a situation where a participant obtains an interpretation that they believe is complete and correct, but which is, however, not the one that the other participant (s) intended them to obtain. At the point of misunderstanding, the interpretations of the participants begin to diverge. It is possible that a breakdown will remain unnoticed in a conversation and the participants continue to talk at cross purposes or continue deviating from the subject under discussion altogether (Yun, 2005). Alternatively, the conversation

might break down, leading one participant or the other to decide that a diversion from the original talk has occurred and possibly attempt to resolve it. An example from Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977; in Liddicoat, 2007, p. 187) demonstrates this;

Hannah: and he's going to make his own paintings.

Bea: Mm hm,

Hannah: and- or I mean his own frames.

Bea: Yeah,

In this extract, Hannah's trouble source (TS) paintings is not taken up by Bea and in so doing she shows that she has understood paintings as unproblematic for her. Hannah now repairs the trouble source from her own turn in third position by saying 'and-or I mean his own frames'. While talk in the second position may indicate a misunderstanding when the speaker says 'Mm hm,' it is also possible that such a misunderstanding may not become apparent until the third position. In this case, the recipient of the original turn may initiate repair in the next turn, or in fourth position relative to the original trouble source. However, Schegloff *et al.*, (1977) described breakdowns as occurring within the turn but did not pay much attention to breakdown between the turns. The present study sought to investigate the breakdowns both within and between the turns.

Breakdowns occur anywhere within the minimal units that make up a session of conversation. The largest unit in a conversation is identified as the session. Andera (2003) describes a session as comprising of communicative units of Acts, which combine to form Moves which in turn combine to form Exchanges and exchanges form Transactions. According to Stenstrom (1994) an act signals what the speaker wishes to communicate or signals the speaker's intention. An act is the smallest element in spoken discourse. A move is the verbal

action which carries the conversation forward (Stenstrom, 1994). A move consists of one or more acts. In effect, the move is a unit which has a function relating to the progression of the conversation. Stenstrom (1994) defines an exchange as the basic unit of conversation. An exchange is composed of more than two moves (initiation and response). Stenstrom (1994) further, defines a transaction as a sequence of exchanges to perform some task in conversation. Most typically there is a boundary marker to indicate that a new transaction is beginning for example, 'okay', 'now'. The unit of Move is identified as the minimal communicative unit in terms of illocutionary acts following Speech Act Theory by Austin (1962).

Furthermore, Roulet (1995) locates speech acts in a wider, hierarchical structure, where dialogues are analysed into one or more 'exchanges', and where exchanges consist of 'moves', which are in turn linked to each other by "the initiative and/ or reactive illocutionary functions which are generally attributed to speech acts", such as a question move followed by an information/ response move. Each move "consists of a main 'discourse act', possibly accompanied by exchanges, moves, or acts that are subordinated to it; those constituents are linked by so-called interactive relations preparation, justification, reformulation" (Roulet, 1995). The trouble sources appearing in and between these units were not, however, the focus of the authors. The present study thus used these discourse units to observe the occurrence of breakdowns in conversation.

Conversation repair refers to the mechanism for dealing with trouble sources which emerge in conversation (Schegloff *et al.*, 1977). In their seminal work on repair in normal conversation, they described a range of ways in which repair can be effected. First, initiation of repair can be done by either the speaker of the trouble source (self- initiated repair) or his conversational partner (other-initiated repair). Second, regardless of who initiates the repair, the repair itself can be carried out by either self or the other participant. The nature and



organization of repair in naturally occurring conversation was first characterized by Schegloff *et al.*, (1977). The phenomenon addressed included responses to a wide range of problems of speaking, listening, and understanding, including but not limited to errors or mistakes. Using data from interactions among native speakers (NS) of English, Schegloff *et al.*, (1977) demonstrated a preference for self-initiation and self-repair over other-initiation and other-repair.

These repairs can take many forms, depending on how and when a misunderstanding becomes apparent. Conversation analysts classify repairs according to how soon after the problematic turn a participant initiates a repair (Schegloff, 1992). The most common type occurs within the turn itself or immediately after it, before the other participant has had a chance to reply. These are called first turn repairs. The next type, second turn repairs occur as the reply to the problematic turn, such as a request for clarification.

Many studies report that examining conversational repair usually identifies breakdowns based on the presence of a sincere clarification request (Brinton & Fujiki, 1989; Garvey, 1977; Shatz & O'Reilly, 1990; Yont, Hewitt & Maccio, 2002). Carsaro (1977) observes that clarification requests serve different pragmatic functions in adult-child interactions. In contrast, In a study on contingent queries on a dependent act in conversation in New York, Garvey (1977) identified clarification request as unsolicited contingent queries that were made by the listener to the speaker to indicate communication breakdown. In their study of miscommunication episodes in parent-child interactions, Shatz and O'Reilly (1990) identified requests functioning as conversational fillers or markers of acknowledgment as rhetorical requests and distinguished them from sincere clarification requests which indicated a breakdown was apparent. The foregoing studies mainly focused on adult-child interactions where such aspects as power relations may be prominent. In the present study, the focus was on teacher-counsellor and students interactions and the effects of conversation repair

strategies that interlocutors use during group guidance and counselling sessions which resemble peer guidance and counselling.

Counselling discourses must possess certain characteristics that distinguish it from other discourses. School counselling discourse has a distinct structure that identifies with a normal conversation session (Andera, 2003). This session is best constructed as conversational discourse if it is to achieve maximum effects. As such it has distinctive communicative units of Acts, which combine to form Moves which in turn combine to form Exchanges and exchanges form Transactions. Given that these counselling discourses occur in institutional settings, the conversations in them assume a more formal structure along predetermined topics except for group counselling which is usually semi-formal in nature. Furthermore, these students' group counselling sessions are more interactive and employ a range of both verbal and non verbal linguistic features to sustain the discussions.

Like any other discourse, issues of context of situation and other related extra-linguistic aspects such as silences of the discourse are important in enhancing the flow of conversation among the participants. Thus, the achievement of counselling success depends on the quality of verbal interactions within the session and other communicative units within the larger counselling discourse. In the current study, communicative units were both verbal and non-verbal which were the repair strategies that participants used during guidance and counselling sessions. Contrary to Andera (2003) who focused on verbal distinctive communicative units, the current study not only observed and examined verbal repair strategies but also non-verbal repair strategies such as silences and their effects on group guidance and counselling discourse.

In order to achieve any meaningful results in student counselling in secondary schools, the counsellor, who designs the counselling environment, must view the guidance and

counselling sessions as conversational and communicative processes. The school guidance and counselling session is a process of communication that addresses problems and challenges of the student client that the teacher counsellor receives for counselling (Pare, 2001). The communication that arises from the dialogue between counsellor and client in whatever setting the interlocution takes place, constitutes a discourse that is specific to this counselling encounter in the school. Pare (2001) indicates that counselling models or theories are constructed as discourses, suggesting that the school realization of a school counselling session is in its manifestation as a discourse that is socially constructed within the institutional limits of a school. Miller and Silverman (1995) argue that counselling talk can range from the portrayal of an individual's life experiences to portrayals of undesired outcomes. They further argue that the description of troubles will only be achieved when a counsellor and a client monitor and respond to each other's talk.

The academic performance which is the principal reason for the pursuit of education continually piles pressure on students due to the increasing workloads and the expectations on performance (Leach, 2003). These issues can be complicated, confusing and, sometimes difficult to deal with constructively. Some of the issues students may struggle with while in school include: building, maintaining and sometimes, transitioning out of friendships, deciphering and navigating social hierarchies and alliances, or working and playing with peers who feel, think and do things differently (Ruto, 2009). It is important that these issues are adequately addressed progressively and within the school as a formal learning environment in order to avert possible juvenile behavioural crises across many schools. Such crises can have far reaching socio-economic consequences that could even threaten to impair the nation's social structures and the future workforce, hence, lowering our competitiveness in the international labour market (Kabuka, Agak & Poipoi, 2011).

Counselling has become an important exercise that has been embraced in most secondary schools in Kenya. Ndichu (2005) observes that counselling in learning institutions has become paramount in order to promote the well-being of the child, help to improve their self image and facilitate achievement in life tasks. Ndichu (2005) also notes that counselling deals with normal people, not primarily those who are mentally ill, because it is about helping people to grow in emotional fitness and health. According to Ndichu (2005), counselling is being done as an attempt to help students stay focused on their academics, participate fully and benefit from the economic and social development of the nation, despite the many challenges they face in terms of academic pressure, peer pressure, negative media influence among others. The rise of behavioural crisis in secondary schools has captured the attention of the Kenya government and other education stakeholders. Subsequently, several parties began expressing interest in the matter through the Ministry of Education Science and Technology advocating that student counselling be continually carried out in all secondary schools in Kenya (Kabuka, Agak & Poipoi, 2011).

Secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County have had to contend with the perennial student behavioural challenges which include student dropout, early pregnancies and parenthood, unsatisfactory academic performance and the growing threat of widespread student unrest due to the increasing levels of violent behaviour among students (Kabuka, Agak & Poipoi, 2011). Investigating the effect of repair strategies on counselling discourse during students' group guidance and counselling is, therefore, one of the primary objectives of this study. Guidance and counselling being sensitive as it is, clients may not easily open up to counsellors. Even if they do so, they can be economical with information. In the process of communication, breakdowns may arise thereby necessitating repair to avoid misunderstandings during a conversation. It is therefore, imperative to study the conversational nature of such discourses in their elements in an attempt to identify

inconsistencies that may lead to breakdowns and misunderstandings, which could eventually impair the success of the guidance and counselling discourse, thereby necessitating conversational repairs.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Conversational competencies include ample possibilities to repair breakdown in conversation sequences. Breakdowns often arise in conversation due to its informal nature that would render its content and objectives difficult to interpret, thereby necessitating conversation repair among the participants. It is imperative to study the conversational nature of discourses so as to identify inconsistencies that may lead to breakdown and misunderstanding and also the effects of the repair strategies used to address them. For instance, during group guidance and counselling in secondary schools, participants may fear expressing themselves on certain issues because they could be ridiculed, victimised or interrupted. Participants may choose to withhold useful information and delay the resolution of some critical issues such as causes of student unrest, dropout, early pregnancies and unsatisfactory academic performance. The ridiculing or interruptions constitute problematic turns in the conversation that must be repaired in order to sustain the objectivity of the session. Studies on conversational repair strategies and their effects on student group counselling discourse could be virtually non-existent. Therefore, it is important to investigate how effective the repair strategies used in conversation are, in addressing the future discourse of group counselling sessions in secondary schools.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What discourse units signal conversation breakdown during school group guidance and counselling discourse in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County?

2. What conversation repair strategies do the counsellors and clients employ during group guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County?
3. How do conversation repair strategies affect the discourse during school group guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County?

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The main aim of the study was to investigate effects of conversation repair strategies employed by both counsellor and clients during secondary school students' group guidance and counselling sessions. The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To identify discourse units that signal conversation breakdown during group guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County.
2. To describe conversation repair strategies employed by counsellors and clients during guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County.
3. To examine the effects of conversation repair strategies on the discourse by counsellors and clients during group guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County.

#### **1.5 Justification of the Study**

The success of any communicative event depends on the construction and realization of meaning between the interlocutors. However, like in any conversation situation, communication breakdown may occur. The study of conversation repair strategies in school group guidance and counselling discourse is significant in assessing the success of the

guidance and counselling process. Furthermore, this study evaluated the repair strategies in terms of their usefulness in effecting communication and ultimately discourse interpretation between the counsellor and the client. This is expected to inform the practice of guidance and counselling, especially on the interventions needed to make communication within the context of school guidance and counselling more effective. Guidance and counselling practitioners in Kenya may use the findings to draft interventions that may help counsellors interact more gainfully with clients in situations similar to those in school guidance and counselling contexts. Finally, it is hoped that the findings of this study contributes to the body of knowledge in conversation repair in specific contexts such as discourse analysis, conversational analysis and therapeutic sessions.

### **1.6 Scope and Limitations**

The study was carried out in eight selected public and private secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub County. These were secondary schools that practised group guidance and counselling sessions during the research period. The student group guidance and counselling sessions were conducted once a month depending on each school's schedule. Thus, though the researcher set out to observe 40 sessions, three schools had six sessions each during the study period totalling to 43 sessions. The data presented here was, therefore, obtained from 13 sessions all of which she was allowed to access. The thirteen sessions constituted thirty percent of the forty-three sessions that were conducted during the time of the study. This was adequate as it presented enough data that was eventually used for the data analysis. The study only focused on thirteen group guidance and counselling sessions where the teacher- counsellor met a small group of student-counselees, as opposed to the individual guidance and counselling sessions where the teacher counsellors had a one-on-one conversation. Furthermore, the sessions used in the study were those conducted within a space identified as guidance and counselling room or other designated space within the

school. Moreover, the study was limited in terms of the group guidance and counselling sessions that were available to the researcher during the period of the study, that is, from June, 2013 to December, 2013 excluding the August and December holidays .

## **1.7 Theoretical Framework**

This section outlines the appropriate theoretical framework guiding the study. In order to analyse the repair strategies and their effects, the study employed Conversation Analysis (CA) Theory.

### **1.7.1 The Conversation Analysis Theory**

The study was premised on the Conversation Analysis theory (CA) develop in the late 1960s and early 1970s by Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson. The sociologists Erving Goffman and Harold Garfinkel, in particular, prepared the ground for which CA arose (Liddicoat, 2007). Conversation Analysis is an approach to the study of talk in interaction which grew out of the ethnomethodological tradition in sociology developed by Garfinkel (1964, 1967), which studies 'the common sense resources, practices and procedures through which members of a society produce and recognise mutually intelligible objects, events and courses of action (Liddicoat, 2007).

These main ideas for the approach were established in *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Garfinkel, 1967). Garfinkel sought to study the social structure of everyday lived experience and to develop an understanding of 'how the structures of everyday activities are ordinarily and routinely produced and maintained' (Garfinkel, 1967). Ethnomethodology is concerned with a member's knowledge of his ordinary affairs, of his own organized enterprises and where that knowledge is treated as part of the same setting that it makes orderable Garfinkel (1974). Ethnomethodological research avoids idealizations, arguing instead that what



members produce are ‘typifications’; categories that are continuously adjusted according to whether the anticipation of an actor is confirmed by another’s action.

The emphasis on studying actual instances of social interaction is further developed in the work of Erving Goffman (1967; 1983), who asserted that ordinary activities of daily life were an important subject for study. Goffman (1967; 1976; 1981; 1983) in particular drew attention to the need to study ordinary instances of speaking, which had in his view been neglected. He argued that talk is socially organized, not merely in terms of who speaks to whom and in what language, but as a little system of mutually ratified and ritually governed face-to-face action, a social encounter (Goffman, 1967).

CA initially focused on casual conversation but its methods were subsequently adapted to embrace more task-and institution-centred interactions. The central purpose of Conversation Analysis as used in the present study is to investigate the norms and conventions that speakers use in interactions to establish communicative understanding. Traditional CA was concerned only with speech of the interlocutors as the observable external event. Normal conversation is often characterized by frequent interruptions to maintain relevance, deviate from the topic or draw attention to other issues either temporarily or completely. The seminal CA work by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) articulated three basic facts about conversation: (a) turn-taking occurrence, (b) one speaker tends to speak at a time and (c) turns are taken with as little overlap between them as possible. These basic tenets provided valuable insights into the understanding of conversation repair strategies employed by teacher-counsellors and students during group guidance and counselling discourse. These tenets are discussed in sections 1.7.1.1, 1.7.1.2 and 1.7.1.3, since they are relevant in this study.

### **1.7.1.1 Turn-taking**

The principle of turn-taking has been established as one of the central interests of CA, as it is the basic component of all conversation. Turns between teachers and students, clients and lawyers, have more boundaries defined by the formal context, whereas telephone conversations among friends are freely variable and determined by elements within the interaction such as power relations (Schegloff, 1992). Moreover, speakers project to ideal not actual transition points because in natural spoken conversation the optimum condition is for as little time as possible to occur between turns. Further, Schegloff (1992) observes that this is practical, since waiting for any speaker to finish completely would result in gaps that would erode the natural flow and meaning as well as the opportunity for any speaker to enter the conversation because either other speakers simultaneously interrupt or the current speaker continues.

Turn constructions have turn construction units that often correspond to linguistic elements such as sentences, phrases, or single words, for example, “Eh!” or “What?” The turn construction units have two prominent properties; the first one is called projectability. As the turn construction proceeds, it is possible for a speaker to project, what kind of a unit it is and when it is likely to end. This leads to the second property, transition-relevant places (TRP). These occur at the boundaries of the turn construction unit and make it possible for transition between speakers.

However, not all talk happening in a conversation involving different participants are considered turns. Edelsky (1981) made this distinction when she differentiated turns from floors. She observing that turns were necessarily on-record referential talk meant for consumption by all and therefore involved distinct utterances referring to the subject under discussion. According to her, floors were like side comments which participants could be

engaged in off record and that would seem chaotic which speakers would clearly explain as their own view of the issues being discussed. Subsequently, she identified two different types of floor: a floor in which one primary interlocutor is the floor-holder and one in which floor involves a collaborative effort in which interlocutors share the floor in a free-for-all. Therefore, these deviations that seemingly defy the systematics of turn taking in conversation should not be considered as breakdowns of the system, but rather another way in which interlocutors are free to interact with one another. The current study did not focus on floor holding as points of conversation breakdown since they were out of scope, off the record talk, and mostly lacked referential content.

Traditional CA, though, focuses on turns to develop insightful accounts of the structural organization of topic shifts (Jefferson, 1986), laughter (Jefferson, 1987), repair and correction (Schegloff, 1986), and overlapping talk (Jefferson, 1986). Although turn-taking was not one of the objectives of the current study, the tenet was an important principle in understanding when and how interlocutors took turns during group guidance and counselling sessions.

### **1.7.1.2 The structure of turn-taking**

According to Schegloff and Sacks (1973), participants' understandings are displayed in interaction and displayed for the interlocutors mainly through the sequential organization of turn-taking in CA. The fact that talk-in interaction is organized by turns leads to an important distinction for CA. Schegloff and Sacks (1973) observe that turns occur one after the other, in a serial order, However, the relationship between turns is not serial but sequential. In this study, the use of Conversation Analysis theory is informed by its specific attribute of being able to avail sequential and interpretive information as used during conversation. Schegloff and Sacks (1973) called these sorts of paired utterances 'adjacency pairs' which are the basic

units on which sequences in conversation are built. Adjacency pairs are pairs (or occasionally trios) of utterances which are contingent upon each other and intrinsically ordered. Examples are: question and answer, and apology and acceptance. Ordinary conversation is normative in nature and it can be readily observed that many turns at talk occur as pairs. A greeting is conventionally followed by another greeting, a farewell by a farewell and a question by an answer. Adjacency pairs have a number of core features which can be used by way of a preliminary definition. They (1) consist of two turns (2) by different speakers, (3) which are placed next to each other in their basic minimal form, (4) which are ordered and (5) which are differentiated into pair types. For example;

(1)

(i) question-answer

John: What time's it?

Betty: Three uh clock.

(ii) greeting-greeting

Amy: Hello.

Jean: Hi.

(iii) summons-answer

Terry: hey Paul,

Paul: uh yeah.

(iv) Telling-accept

John: I've just finished my last exam.

Betty: that's great.

Adapted from Liddicoat, (2007, p. 107)

In each of the examples i, ii, iii and iv, the first turn of the pair initiates some action and makes some next action relevant. The second turn responds to the prior turn and completes the action which was initiated in the first turn. These two turns together accomplish an action.

The basic sequence, then, is composed of two ordered turns at talk:

(2)

A: first pair part

B: second pair part

Adapted from Liddicoat, (2007, p. 107)

Participants in conversation orient to this basic sequence structure in developing their talk and adjacency pairs have a normative force in organizing conversation. Adjacency pairs set up expectations about how talk will proceed and if these are not met then the talk is seen as being problematic (Heritage, 1984a, 1984b). The insight here is not just that answers follow questions but that responses are conditionally relevant to utterances in prior turns. The second pair part is conditional on the first, pair part. The normative constraints on adjacency pairs are important to CA because the researcher can draw inferences in the cases where typical responses do not occur. For example, a lack of an answer to a question may imply evasion. Moreover, the resolution of the meaning of the break in normative constraint is confirmed in subsequent turns through the next-turn proof procedure (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). This tenet was a basis for examining units that signalled breakdown or where typical responses did not occur necessitating repair in objective one in the current study.

### 1.7.1.3 Turn-taking and conversation breakdown

One key element of CA, and which the current study referred to, is that concerned with the occurrence of ‘trouble’, such as mishearing, misunderstanding, the speaker being unable to find a word, or the statement of incorrect information. Such difficulties are resolved through a ‘repair’, which may be of self- or other-initiated, and self- or other- repaired (Schegloff *et al.*, 1977). In his work on CA, Kenworthy (1984, 1986) initially developed conversational repair devices to study the conversation interactions of children with hearing impairment and their caregivers. The strategies have been successfully applied to adult-adult interactions, although not necessarily to address hearing impairment, but rather to facilitate the flow of conversation without unwanted deviations. Subsequently, Kenworthy (1984, 1986) developed a typology of conversational repair strategies. The following is the typology of conversational repair strategies and their examples.

#### A Typology of Conversational Repair Strategies (Adopted from Kenworthy, 1984; 1986)

<b>Conversational Strategy</b>	<b>Example</b>
Request for repetition	“Say that again, please.”
Neutral query	“Huh!” “What?”
Request for paraphrasing	“Tell me that in another way....”
Conversational devices	“Uh-huh!” “Okay” “Yeah”
Request for confirmation	“The blue plate is broken?”
Request for specification	“Which plate is broken?”
Specific constituent repetition	“What is the blue plate?”
Other repetition (shadowing)	Person quietly repeats what is being said.

Kenworthy (1984, 1986) posits that conversational repair strategies occur frequently in conversations and serve to articulate, repair and direct the conversation to ensure better flow, understanding and communication. These strategies were described as required by objective two in the current study in the context of group guidance and counselling sessions where dialogic interlocutions were under observation.

The third objective of the current study was to examine the effects of repair strategies on the counselling discourse by teacher-counsellors and students during group guidance and counselling sessions. Basing on the turn-taking and conversation breakdown tenet and the typology of conversational repair strategies developed by Kenworthy (1984; 1986), the effects of repair strategies employed by interlocutors during group guidance and counselling were examined.

### **1.8 Summary**

This chapter presented background information to the study. Further, the chapter stated the problem, research objectives, justification of the study, scope and limitation of the study and theoretical framework. Since the issues raised in this introductory chapter require details, the next chapter seeks to review existing literature concerning conversation repair strategies with a view to elaborating on the variables outlined in the objectives and pinpointing the knowledge gap the study intended to fill.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on previous studies related to conversation repair strategies. The chapter begins by explaining communication in school guidance and counselling and conversation analysis to provide a background on the communication challenges that the programme is likely to encounter since they are communicative events meant to have greater outreach on students organized in groups. Therefore sections 2.2 and 2.3 lay the necessary ground for the understanding and interpretation of the study problem and objectives. The review then narrows down to the specific objectives of the study focusing on, examining discourse units that signal conversational breakdowns in 2.4, strategies used in conversational repair are described in 2.5, then effects of conversation repair strategies on guidance and counselling discourse are examined in 2.6.

#### **2.2 Communication in School Guidance and Counselling**

Counselling in schools is an interactive relationship that exists between the student and the teacher-counsellor. Egbochuku (2002) defines counselling as a face to face situation in which a counsellor, by virtue of her or his training and skills, helps the client to face, perceive, clarify, solve and resolve his adjustment problems or issues. Counselling high school students can be very challenging given that they are at their adolescent stage which is a unique phase of life (Ruto, 2009). At this stage, adolescents go through biological and emotional changes. Seeking counselling especially from persons with authority over them for example teachers, counsellors and parents may be challenging because the normal physical and psychological changes of adolescence affect the young person's self-confidence, relationships, social skills, and general thinking (Omizo and Omizo, 1998). Adolescents may feel fearful, embarrassed, or uncomfortable around authoritative figures. They may be reluctant to disclose personal



information for fear of being scolded or mocked, especially in the presence of such persons. Most adolescents have concerns about confidentiality, which impacts their willingness to discuss personal issues with the counsellor and it is important that they be assured that the confidentiality of the contents of the counselling sessions will be upheld. Furthermore, adolescents are often adventurous and experiment with various ideas and objects including sexual relationships which they may be afraid to reveal for fear of alienation. This lack of revealing vital information will impede the success of the counselling process (Stone & Dahir, 2011). Students may find it difficult to open up to those superior to them and evade some questions they are asked or become defensive during a conversation. This behaviour during guidance and counselling sessions can result to possible communication breakdown. In such cases, teacher-counsellors need to resolve the breakdown by employing repair strategies and in effect encourage an interactive and smooth flow of discourse.

When interacting with a counsellor or an adult staff member, many adolescents feel shy about seeking professional help on personal matters and embarrassed that they are seeking assistance on a taboo topic for example, HIV/AIDS, sexuality, wanting to have sex and fear to be pregnant. They are also worried that someone will see them and tell their parents and feel inadequate when it comes to describing their concern and are often ill-informed about the nature of their problems in general. Further, they are anxious that they could be having a serious issue that has not only grave consequences, but also afraid that they might die or be discriminated against, victimised, and feeling intimidated by some unapproachable teachers in schools. As a result, students become defensive because they might have been compelled to attend these sessions against their will. They also develop resistance to receiving help or engaging in care and treatment because of rebelliousness, a fear of the unknown, or another reason and unsure about how to ask for help around living with a chronic condition (ICAP, 2010).

For the counsellor, this means creating a facilitative environment that will build trust and encourage an interactive guidance and counselling session. During group guidance and counselling, the student may particularly fear expressing himself on certain issues because he could be ridiculed, forcefully interrupted or even 'labelled' (Rudatsikira, Siziya, Kazembe & Muula, 2007). The ridiculing or forceful interruptions are actually turns in the conversation that must be repaired in order to sustain the objectivity of the session although the studies so far do not explicitly identify them in these terms (Pare, 2001). The way turns are handled during the counselling session may encourage or discourage the student as most of them are averse to judgemental words or body language and also condescending communication. The kind of language used during these turns should also be clear ensuring better rapport and ease of conversation, as the adolescents prefer words and language that they can not only understand, but equally appropriate to their age and developmental stage (Ndichu, 2005). Although this study did not examine the counselling function between the counsellor and client, it sought to investigate conversational repair strategies and their effects on the discourse that takes place among counsellors and clients in a school context.

Success in school counselling interactions is dependent on the effectiveness of communication between interactants in a counselling session (Miller & Silverman, 1995). Communication can be defined as the process by which we assign and convey meaning in order to create shared understanding between two or more individuals or communicating entities (Burnett & Dollar, 1989; Burnett, 2005). To achieve communication, the interlocutors require interpersonal skills in processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analyzing, and evaluating information. It is through communication that collaboration and cooperation occur (Burnett, 2005). Additionally, it is through the communication process that the sharing of a common meaning between the sender and the receiver takes place (Burnett & Dollar, 1989). The foregoing views guide the current research in the data analysis. This study

approached communication repairs as some of the tools available to interlocutors for effective communication. The study therefore described conversation repair strategies that both teacher-counsellors and students employ during group guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools within Kakamega Central Sub-County.

### **2.3 Conversation Analysis**

Analyzing talk has been the preoccupation of several researchers in the fields of sociology, philosophy and linguistics. This could be because of the central role talk plays in creating order in the society. Linguists widely recognize conversation as a vast area in their discipline. However, one that remains least defined due to the various inputs from the other disciplines that are also interested in this area (Schiffrin, 1994). While there have been many approaches to analysing discourse, conversation analysis itself as an aspect of discourse analysis seems to break from the norm of carrying presumptions into the analysis. Schiffrin (1994) further observes that CA differs from the others, in that, rather than analyzing social order *per se*; it seeks to discover the methods by which members of the society produce a sense of social order. It is from this understanding that the current study sought to examine the repair strategies teacher-counsellors and students employed to resolve possible breakdown in order to restore the flow of conversation during group guidance and counselling sessions.

Cicourel (1972) states that conversation is a source of much of our sense of social order, for example, it produces many of the typifications underlying our notions of social role. He also recognizes the internal structure of conversation when he says that conversation also exhibits its own order and manifests its own sense of structure. These two observations are central to the present study. They are related to each other by a cause-effect relationship in the sense that the disorganization or disruption of the latter readily manifests in the former if not adequately addressed. Similarly, it can be argued that trouble in the former could be traced back to the latter, that is, the manner in which talk is used to address societal disorder.

Schegloff (2001) posits that the theoretical framework of conversational analysis can be considered to consist of two parts: that which comprises basic premises which underpin the field of study itself: and that which constitutes the theoretical base of conversation. Probably, the most important premise of the first of these is the requirement that the conversation analyzed should be natural conversation. ten Have (1999) points out that whilst ideally the conversation should be 'natural occurring'; Labov's theory of Observer Paradox renders this virtually impossible, thus concluding that the conversation should be as natural as possible. A second basic premise of Conversation Analysis is that the conversation itself constitutes the entire data available for analysis: that the true explanation as to how conversation works is within the conversation itself and subsequent contemplation by those party to it, only represents how they believe conversation works (Paltridge, 2000). Schegloff (2001) defines the third basic premise through his thesis that everyday common conversation is the basic form of conversation, upon which conversation of a more institutional nature is based. Conversation is often seen to consist of two constituent types: everyday ordinary conversation; and institutional interaction. Moreover, there is a corresponding subdivision of Conversation Analysis into what ten Have, (1999) terms 'pure' Conversation Analysis and 'applied' Conversation Analysis respectively.

Starting at the highest level, conversation can be seen to comprise three key stages: the opening sequence, the main body, and the closing sequence (Paltridge, 2000). Openings typically, though not always, consist of a greeting and some form of opening up of the lines of communication; they serve to establish communication and warn of an imminent attack on a person's right to privacy (Finegan, 1999). Openings tend to be highly formulaic and their exact nature depends on the particular culture of those involved, the relationship between them, and the context in which they find themselves. In examining the first few moments of a

telephone conversation opening, a regular pattern of talk emerges similar to that found in extract 1:

(1) Telephone ((ring))

Anna: Hello?

Cal: Oh hi:.

Adopted from Liddicoat, (2007, p.224)

On the basis of this extract, we can make the following observations: the telephone rings, the recipient of the call speaks and after this the caller speaks. It is this quite simple structure which has to be accounted for first of all in understanding a telephone conversation opening. Closings, which tend to be slightly less formulaic, generally commence with a pre-closing sequence consisting of such utterances as “well then” or “ok” accompanied by falling intonation Paltridge (2000), the purpose of which is to ensure that everybody is happy for the conversation to close at that point (Finegan, 1999). The conversation then usually closes with a round of farewells. Extract 2 is an example from Liddicoat, (2007, p. 256)

It is readily apparent to speakers of English that a conversation is usually ended by an exchange of goodbyes or similar tokens and that after such an exchange a conversation is considered closed and the turn-taking system is suspended, as in extract 2:

(2)

Emma: So we' ll do it at 7. 30

Sue: It will be fun

Emma: Alright,

Sue: Okay

Emma: Bye=

Sue: Bye.,

An exchange of goodbyes therefore is a terminal sequence for conversation that declares the conversation to be at an end.

Regarding the main body of a conversation Paltridge (2000) adapts work done by Bums and Joyce (1997) and Eggins and Slade (1997) to suggest that there is a continuum of different types of everyday conversation of increasing internal structure ranging from chat, through gossip, opinions, anecdotes, to narratives.

However, beyond the overall internal structure, there is a lower level of conversational organization, current understanding of which is still based on the seminal work of Sacks *et al.*, (1974). The key idea is that conversation consists of 'turns', and that conversationalists take turns to hold the floor (turn-take), these changes of turn generally taking place at 'transition relevant places' (TRP). These TRPs are marked by signals which can be either verbal for example, a question, a marker such as 'you know', reduced pitch, reduced loudness, reduced intonation, or the syntactic completion of an utterance (Paltridge, 2000) or non-verbal for example, changing gaze direction (which typically returns to the listener at this time (Kendon, 1967, 1990; Graddol, Cheshire, & Swann, 1994), or other body language cues.

Rieger (2003) observes that in a conversation, speakers use place holders such as *uh*, *uhm* or *well* in pauses or silences which are intended not to lose their turn. By contrast, Paltridge (2006) observe that people may hold on to a turn by not pausing too long at the end of an utterance and starting straight away with saying something else. Graddol, Cheshire and Swann, (1994) also highlight the importance of the role played by the ‘projectability’ of conversation originally proposed by Sacks *et al.*, (1974), pointing out that since the gaps between turns in normal speech are shorter than the reaction time of most people, interlocutors must be predicting when they will be able to take their turn.

When there are more than two conversationalists, ‘turn allocation strategies’ determine who will take a turn. The current speaker has a special right to select the next speaker, which he might do overtly by naming them or asking them a question, or less overtly through ‘gaze’ (Graddol, Cheshire and Swann, 1994). Alternatively, and usually in the absence of selection by the current speaker, a speaker may ‘self-select’, in which case the rule of “first starter gets the floor” generally prevails (Graddol, *et al.*, 1994). In the case that the next speaker is neither nominated nor self-selects, the current speaker usually continues, often with what Coulthard (1977) refers to as a post completer’, which could, for example, be a reiteration of the question. Cameron (2001) believes that there is an ordered set of rules for the allocation of the next turn. They include, the current speaker selects the next speaker, if this mechanism does not operate, then the next speaker self-selects. If this mechanism does not operate, then the current speaker may continue.

Through turn-taking, the conversational problems of silence and simultaneous speech are smoothly resolved. In this study, silence refers to the period when no sound is uttered by conversation participants. Maslamani (2011) observes that silences work in different ways in different contexts and have different interpretations in these contexts. Maslamani (2011) further states that when a silence occurs at the end of a completed action in the talk, such as

after the answer to a question, the silence is not attributable to any particular speaker. When they occur, silences are treated in different ways in each of the two contexts. Where silence does not belong to any particular speaker, it may become quite prolonged, and may result in a lapse in the talk. However, where silence is attributable to an individual participant, it is likely to be repaired if it becomes too long (Maslamani, 2011).

Whilst simultaneous speech often occurs, it is generally of a non-problematic form such as: 'terminal overlap', which merely constitutes part of the projection of conversation (Graddol, *et al.*, 1994); 'continuers', which are minimal responses such as 'ok' or 'I see' that provide feedback to the speaker to reassure him of attentiveness; or 'choral speech', such as congratulations said in unison. However, when somebody interrupts or attempts to take somebody else's turn, problematic simultaneous speech does occur and a fight for the floor ensues; generally the person who speaks loudest wins the turn.

Parker's (1988) descriptive model of speaking sequences is still a somewhat 'mechanical' approach to turntaking. Edelsky (1981) noted that in most research turns were defined in a 'technical' way. According to her, turns were defined as 'solo talk, beginning the instant one person starts to talk and ending prior to the instant someone else begins to talk alone' (Burke, 1979). Parker (1988) doesn't state explicitly what he means by 'floor' and 'turns'. He uses the word floor in two ways. First, it is used in 'having the floor', which he equals to 'speaking in the conversation' or 'taking a speaking turn'. In this way, no distinction is made between floor and turn. The second use of floor is connected to a specific state in Parker's model of speaking sequences. However, Edelsky (1981) described the floor as 'The acknowledged what's-going-on within a psychological time/space.' that can be the development of a topic or a function such as teasing, or soliciting a response, or an interaction of the two. It can be developed or controlled by one person at a time or by several simultaneously or in quick succession. It is official or acknowledged in that, if questioned, participants could describe what's going on as



‘he's talking about grades’ or ‘she's making a suggestion’ or ‘we're all answering her’ (Edelsky, 1981). With the addition ‘whithin a psychological time/space’ Edelsky means that turns that together build one floor do not have to directly follow up each other. It is possible that these turns are separated by other turns.

According to O’Connell *et al.*, (1990), the ultimate criterion for the success of a conversation is not the smooth interchange of speaking turns or any other prescriptive ideal, but the fulfillment of the purposes entertained by two or more interlocutors. Thus emphasis must be placed on language as a means of communication between interlocutors in a conversation. The use of language (as a social tool) is determined by the intention of a user and not purely by the intrinsic structure of language. Therefore, deviations from the described simplest systematics of turntaking should not be considered as ‘breakdowns’ of the system, but can be seen as just another way in which interlocutors are free to interact with one another. For example, the turntaking systematics takes as an assumption that ‘one party talks at a time’ and that simultaneous talk occurs but only for a short time. But there are instances of more-than-one-at-a-time that are not brief (Edelsky, 1981). For instance, in a jam session when many participants join the talk, it may not necessarily lack order or be described as chaotic. The foregoing discussions guided the current study in observing ways through which teachers and student hold the floor or select the next speaker during group guidance and counselling sessions.

Silence normally occurs in conversation and has been cited to perform different functions such as; boundary marking, prosodic and communicative functions (Zuo, 2002; Lemak, 2012). Kivik (1998) pointed out that irrespective of its definition, silence was apparently, syntactic, because it shapes sequences of speech, semantic, because it carries meaning, and pragmatic, because it organizes social relationships. Moreover, silence is inherently social

and communicative since it only takes one person to produce speech, but it takes the cooperation of all to produce silence (Jaworski, 1993).

Zuo (2002) observes that since silence is characterized by its multideterminism, its occurrence is determined by multiplicity of physical, psychological, linguistic, stylistic and interactive factors. Accordingly, Chafe (1985) and Nakane (2007) state that silence cannot be examined in isolation; psychological, linguistic, identity-based, stylistic and interactive aspects of silence matter too, but they are often overlooked. As a consequence, silence is difficult to define. Tannen and Saville-Troike (1985) distinguish silence that is utilized for structuring communication from communicative silence. Enninger (1987) classifies silence into two kinds: situation-specific silence and culture-specific silence. The former is influenced by contextual demands, whereas the latter is affected primarily by culture. In the present study, silence was observed from a contextual point of view and not from the culture-specific perspective where it communicated breakdown in conversation.

Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) listed three types of silences: 'pauses', 'gaps', and 'lapses'. 'Pauses' are silences that occur within a single turn, 'gaps' occur at a transition relevance place (TRP), and 'lapses' occur at a TRP when talk discontinues and the floor is not claimed by any of the fellow participants (Nakane, 2007). An interesting issue stated by Jaworski (1993) is related to the length of silences; the length of silences is found to be inconsistent among cultures and linguistic backgrounds. For instance, the length of pauses by Japanese participants tends to be longer than that of English participants (Fujimura-Wilson 2007; Jaworski, 2005). In English, however, a lot of devices such as back channels, 'well', and 'you know' can be employed to avoid pauses and fill inter-pauses (Shigemitsu, 2007). The foregoing studies guide the current study in identifying types of silences and devices teacher-counsellors and students employ during group guidance and counselling discourse.

The studies further guide the current study in the analysis and interpretation of silences experienced during group guidance and counselling discourse.

Another key aspect of Conversation Analysis theory is that concerned with the occurrence of ‘trouble’, such as mishearing, misunderstanding, the speaker being unable to find a word, or the statement of incorrect information. Such difficulties are resolved through a ‘repair’, which maybe self or other-initiated, and self or other-repaired. An example of self-initiation and other initiation working on the same trouble source can be seen in the following extracts from Schegloff *et al.*, (1977); in Liddicoat, (2007, p. 174).

(3)

Bea: Then more people will show up. Cuz they won’t feel obligated to sell, to buy.

Alfred: Hey the first time they stopped me from selling cigarettes was this morning.

(4)

Bea: From selling cigarettes?

Alfred: From buying cigarettes. They [said uh

In extracts 3 and 4, the trouble source is a problem of word selection; in both cases the use of sell instead of buy. In extract 3, the repair is initiated by saying ‘to sell’ and repaired by Bea in the first turn by saying ‘to buy’, that is, self-repaired. In extract 4 it is initiated by Alfred in the second turn by saying ‘From buying cigarettes’, that is, other repaired where the hearer notices a breakdown in the speaker’s statement when saying ‘From selling cigarettes?’. Self-initiation and other-initiation are specialized for which participant in the conversation identifies a trouble in prior talk. They are not specialized for the type of trouble to be repaired. The preference is always for self-initiation and self-repairs. However, this holds

only in a one-on-one conversation since, in group conversation, the repair sequence is determined largely by the social communication context as was observed in the current study.

One further body of theory which has immediate relevance to Conversation Analysis is that relating to the construction of meaning in a conversation. Although, undoubtedly the general linguist will also want to analyse how meaning is created in a conversation, Conversation Analysis *per se* concerns itself only with the study of how a conversation is organized (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). They further posit that CA seeks to discover the methods by which members of a society produce a sense of social order. It is applied in tracing trouble sources in conversation and the manner in which talk is used to address disorder in the society. It is used in identifying transition relevant places which are marked by signals as well as identifying minimal responses and choral speech said in unison which reassures the speaker of attentiveness (Sacks *et al.*, 1974).

Further, adjacency pairs have a normative force in organizing conversation in that they set up expectations about how talk will proceed and if these are not met then the talk is seen as being problematic (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). Repair sequences allow the participants to deal with problems or troubles in speaking, hearing and understanding the talk in conversation (Schegloff, 2000). Other, more interesting adjacency pairs are: the insertion sequence, where a second adjacency pair is inserted within the first, for example, ‘Why do you ask?’ the pre-announcement sequence, for example, ‘Guess what’ (Paltridge, 2000); the post- expansion sequence for example, ‘Really?’ (Paltridge, 2000) the solitary sequence for example, bad news followed by ‘Oh, that’s dreadful’ (Schmitt, 2002); and the converging pair sequence for example, ‘I love it’ ‘So do I’ (Schmitt, 2002). All adjacency pairs have corresponding preferred and dispreferred responses this distinction being based on linguistic expectation rather than actual preference. The preferences for agreement and contiguity can be considered to be two basic organizing principles for sequences and there is a relationship between them

which plays an important role in how turns at talk are designed. This can be seen in extracts 10 and 11 adopted from Liddicoat, (2007, p.113)

(10) [Lunch]

Joy: Have yuh got the papers for the meeting ye' Carol^

Carol: Yeah=they came in th' s morning.

(11) [Lunch]

Joy: ' N will the report be finished fun the next meeting, dyuh know,

Carol: (0.2) well I dunno: 't seems to be taking lon:gerth' n we thought so no, I' d guess not until the one after

In 10 and 11, one second pair part (SPP) is preferred and the other is dispreferred. In extract 10, the SPP is in agreement with the trajectory established by the first pair part (FPP) and the SPP is also immediately contiguous with its FPP. In extract 11, however, the SPP does not agree with the trajectory established by the FPP and the SPP is separated from the FPP by other talk: (.) well I dunno: 't seems to be taking longer th'n we thought. These two extracts exemplify a basic principle for the design of turns at talk: preferred SPPs come early in their turns and are contiguous with the FPP, and dispreferred SPPs are delayed in their turns and are thus not contiguous with their FPPs (Pomerantz, 1984). According to Fraser (1990), dispreferred responses are generally softened through the use of 'mitigation devices', such as: delay, use of markers such as 'well', appreciations, justifications, explanations, and insertion sequences. In order to avoid a dispreferred response, the instigator of an adjacency pair will often pre-sequence, for example pre-inviting such as, "Are you busy tomorrow?" (ten Have, 1999). The foregoing discussions about adjacency pairs were used in the current study as a basis for identifying and examining a problematic utterance in the conversation. In addition,

the foregoing studies lay the necessary ground for the current investigation for the interpretation and analysis of the data collected in relation to the three specific objectives of the study. Paltridge, (2000), was concerned with insertion sequence and dispreferred and preferred responses in conversation. Contrary to Paltridge (2000), the current study concerned itself with examining adjacency pairs which were trouble sources that necessitated repair during students' group guidance and counselling in Kakamega Central Sub-County of Kakamega County.

#### **2.4 Discourse Units as Signals of Conversation Breakdown**

Degand and Simon (2007) posit that discourse units are a vital component for analysing spoken discourse as well as written discourse. They further argue that in spite of its crucial role in discourse segmentation, there is no consensus in the literature on what a minimal discourse unit is and how it should be identified. In the present study, identifying the discourse units that signal conversation breakdown during group counselling sessions in secondary schools was the second objective. According to Degand and Simon (2007), the minimal discourse unit should be defined in terms of two linguistic criteria: syntax and prosody. They develop a heuristics for identifying minimal discourse units in (spoken) discourse and illustrate this with a piece of spontaneous conversation.

In discourse analysis, it is commonly acknowledged that discourse is hierarchically structured (Mann & Thompson, 1987; Roulet, 1995). The assumption is that a piece of discourse is built up from smaller 'building blocks' related to one another in a coherent way. What these building blocks actually look like differs according to the discourse model at stake. Mann and Thompson (1987) content themselves with stating that the minimal units are 'typically clauses'. According to Degand and Simon (2007), most of the authors tackling the theoretical issue of defining Minimal Discourse Units (MDUs) acknowledge their bi-dimensional status

with a linguistic face (in the form of syntactic clauses) and a textual face (in the form of contextualised information units).

On the basis of Selting's (2000) work on Turn-Constructional Units in the framework of Conversation Analysis, this study shares the multi-dimensional view of MDU and considered them as being the smallest interactionally relevant complete linguistic unit(s), in a given context, that is constructed with syntactic and prosodic resources within their semantic, pragmatic, and sequential context.

Understanding a piece of discourse is an incremental process in which new segments are integrated with the preceding ones to construct a coherent mental representation of the discourse content. Consequently, MDUs can be defined as devices for updating this representation (van Dijk, 1999). However, the general problem of this assertion is that they do not make explicit the link between the textual segments and the conceptual ideas they convey since the mental representations are composed of concepts (ideas), not of 'linguistic sentences'.

Hannay and Kroon (2005) propose a link between strategic units ('acts') and conceptual units('ideas'). The conceptual units correspond to the conceptual content of the discourse, individualized in the form of ideas thus, they are abstract entities involved in text processing (production and comprehension), but not as such materialised within the discourse. Following Chafe (1992), discourse units come in three types: (i) fragmentary units are truncated, and will at this stage be disregarded from the analysis; (ii) substantive units convey ideas of events, states or referents; (iii) regulatory units, regulate the interaction of information flow; that is, the development of discourse, the interaction between participants, the expression of the speaker's mental process, and/or the judgement of the validity of the information. In this current investigation, substantive and regulatory discourse units were employed to identify

and examine inconsistencies that led to breakdowns so as to minimise misunderstandings as well as regulate the interaction and flow of information during students' group guidance and counselling discourse.

According to Degand and Simon (2007), a workable set of segmentation principles implies the use of explicit criteria, that is, criteria based on observable, linguistic features. They provide the discourse analyst with a two-steps procedure: (i) segmenting the flow of speech into MDUs, and (ii) distinguishing between the three types of units: fragmentary, substantive and regulatory. Although the current study did not use the distinguishing features as suggested by Chafe (1992), it focused on spoken discourse and identified syntactic and prosodic units as MDUs that signalled conversation breakdowns in group guidance and counselling discourse.

Syntactic units comprise a "nucleus" (mostly verbs, but also nouns or adjectives) accompanied with all its "dependants". A dependant is a clause in a sentence that gives information related to the main clause but cannot exist alone. Each "nucleus" may govern various kinds of dependants. The major distinction in syntactic terms can be drawn between elements governed by the verb (actants and circumstants) and those that are not (adjuncts or associated elements). Governed elements have an interrogative pronominal counterpart, while associated elements do not have them. Intonation units are identified in terms of major intonation boundaries described by Mertens (1993) as a sequence of syllables grouped by a final accent carrying a high tone projecting "more to come" or a low tone signalling finality, which are usually signalled by the presence of silent pause. Comeau, Genesee and Mendelson (2007) state that due to multiple reasons such as speaking too softly, pronouncing words inaccurately, poor lexical choice or providing vague explanations participants in a conversation encounter communication breakdowns frequently. The foregoing studies reviewed, enabled the researcher to examine discourse units in an attempt to identify



inconsistencies that would lead to breakdowns and misunderstandings as outlined in objective one. Finally, the syntactic and intonation units formed the basis for the analysis of discourse units that signalled conversational breakdown in school group guidance and counselling discourse.

## **2.5 Conversational Repair in Discourse**

Repair is an organization of practices of talk in which participants can deal with problems or troubles in speaking, hearing, or understanding talk. According to Yun (2005), repair is a universal phenomenon and some of its mechanisms can be observed cross-linguistically, a fact that informs us of the general nature of human communication. He observes that spontaneous conversation is characterized by frequent instances of “broken” language segments that have been extensively researched on. The repaired segment refers to the segment of utterance that repairs the “trouble-source”, that is, the segment of emerging utterance that is repaired (Yun, 2005). In this regard, it should be noted that sometimes repaired segments cannot be traced to an obvious error or mistake, while interestingly sometimes obvious errors or mistakes are simply not remedied at all. Therefore, it will be more appropriate to use “repair” rather than “correction” to capture a wider range of speech phenomena (Yun, 2005). Such repairs usually take many forms depending on the context and the environment in which the conversation is taking place. Schegloff, *et al.*, (1977) pointed out that nothing is, in principle, excludable from the class repairable. For this reason the term repair is preferred to correction because the latter refers to the replacement of an error, while the former includes more than the replacement of an error. Repair here is not only a replacement or correction but can also involve other phenomena such as word searches that do not involve hearable errors. Schiffrin, (1994) content that since conversation in itself has its own order, it has an abundance of ‘repair’, which as defined by Fox, Hayashi and Jasperson (1994) is any instance in which an emerging utterance is stopped in some way, is

then aborted, recast, or redone. In this way, the conversation remains tractable. The foregoing discussion were a basis on which the current study described repair strategies employed to resolve possible breakdowns in order to refocus conversation during group guidance and counselling sessions.

The nature and organization of repair in naturally occurring conversation was first characterized by Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977). The phenomenon addressed here includes responses to a wide range of problems of speaking, listening, and understanding, including but not limited to errors or mistakes. Schegloff, *et al.*, (1977), state that the relevance of repair to syntax-for-conversation is universally considered to be one of the most influential papers on the repair mechanism in conversation. A distinction needs to be drawn between the initiation of repair and the potential outcome of the repair. Schegloff, *et al.*, (1977) argue that the one who performs or accomplishes a repair is not necessarily the one who initiated the repair operation. The repair may then be carried out by the speaker of the problematic talk (self-repair) or by the other speaker (other-repair).

Using data from interactions among native speakers (NS) of English, Schegloff, *et al.*, (1977) demonstrated a preference for self-initiated and self-repair over other-initiated and other-repair. Self-initiated repairs are not preceded by an overt speech act, thereby making it difficult at times to examine the source of breakdown and the contingent repair behaviour. McHoul (1990) found out that in classroom setting, there is more tendency on other-initiation mostly by teachers and self-completed repair by students. He concluded that other correction can occur without difficulty, but self-correction is a much more routine and observable phenomenon and it is frequently undertaken by students following initiation by teachers. In addition, Markee (2000), claim that there are two distinct types of repair in non-native speakers interaction, self-initiated, self-completed repair versus self-initiated, other-completed repair that reflected their relative states of knowledge at particular moments of

conversation. A study done on conversation repairs on the Mandarin language by Yun (2005) revealed that much preference was given to self-initiated repairs, while least preference was given to third turn initiation whereas other-initiation occurs in only one prominent position, that is, the turn immediately subsequent to trouble-source turn. It is also important to bear in mind that not all initiations will necessarily lead to repair outcome because sometimes a repair can be initiated and later abandoned (Yun, 2005).

The foregoing studies were important insights to the current research because they formed the basis of describing the repair mechanisms interlocutors employed during group guidance and counselling discourse. They were further applied in distinguishing between the initiation of a repair and the effect of the repair. Contrary to Schegloff *et al.*, (1977), the current study used data from interactions among non-native speakers (NNS) of English during group guidance and counselling discourse. This study was carried out in selected secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County, Kenya to establish whether NNS of English adhere to self-initiation and self-repair. Further the review formed a basis for identification of words or phrases that indicated the utterance that contained a trouble source which necessitated a repair.

Repair as defined by Jefferson (1984), include instances of replacement of one utterance with another, instances of supplying of words when there is no apparent error, and outright correction. On one hand, replacement refers to repetition of all or a part of the prior utterance with some change in the form of a paraphrase or reformulation. In this case, the repair recipient's utterance may or may not contain an apparent error. Even when an utterance does not contain an error, the other party may replace the utterance with another way of expressing the same thing. On the other hand, outright correction refers to explicit provision of the correct form following a repair recipient's apparent error, and is compatible with what Jefferson (1984) calls 'exposed correction'. It is an activity that isolates the correction,

making of it an interactional business in its own right; that is., exposing it (Jefferson 1984). This kind of repair explicitly isolates the part of the utterance that includes an error, and may contain a word or phrase indicating that the prior other-repair utterance contains a mistake. The foregoing insights enabled the researcher to describe conversation repair strategies that were employed by teacher-counsellors and students to identify the part of the utterance that contained a trouble source demanding a repair during group guidance and counselling discourse.

In a study in New York, on contingent queries on a dependent act in conversation, Garvey (1977) identified clarification request as unsolicited contingent queries that were made by the listener to the speaker to indicate communication breakdown. Those queries that functioned as conversational fillers, markers of incredulity or acknowledgment were not identified as clarification requests. However, Garvey (1977) also noted that markers of incredulity may at times be clarification requests if they indicated a communication breakdown in the conversation.

Further, in a study in New York, on contingent queries in pre-schoolers Garvey (1977) illustrated how different clarification requests elicited different kinds of repair responses. For example, non-specific requests or neutral requests such as “huh?” and “what?” generally elicited a repetition of the original utterance by the speaker. In contrast, specific requests for example, specific request for repetition, specific request for specification and specific request for confirmation which queried a specific component of the speaker’s utterance usually elicited a repetition of a specific component in the speaker’s original utterance, or required the speaker to provide specific additional information, or a confirmatory response like “yes” or “no” to resolve the breakdowns. The findings indicate the interdependent relationship that exists between clarification requests and repair responses, and how that relationship influences the emergence of certain repair behaviours. This information provides a rationale

as to why certain types of clarification requests are employed in conversational repair research to elicit specific kinds of repair behaviours. The current study described contingent and non-contingent queries with an aim of establishing types of repair responses elicited by teacher-counsellors and students during group guidance and counselling sessions in Kakamega Central Sub-County, Kenya.

Similarly, in their study of miscommunication episodes in parent-child interactions in New York Shatz and O'Reilly (1990), identified requests functioning as conversational fillers or markers of acknowledgment as rhetorical requests and distinguished them from sincere clarification requests which indicated a breakdown was apparent. Studies that have examined conversational repair usually identify breakdowns based on the presence of a sincere clarification request (Brinton & Fujiki, 1989; Garvey, 1977; Shatz & O'Reilly, 1990; Yont, Hewitt & Maccio, 2002). Shatz and O'Reilly (1990) studied miscommunication episodes involving parent-child interactions contrary to the current study that described conversation repair strategies employed by teacher-counsellors and students during group guidance and counselling discourse.

Clarification requests, as stated in Garvey (1977) studies, place unique demands on the speaker when a communication breakdown occurs in conversations. Ora, (2003) observes that neutral queries are non-specific requests for repetition and are particularly difficult for speakers, as they require them to identify the source of breakdown and adopt appropriate repair behaviour to fix the breakdown. In contrast, requests for confirmation or specific requests for repetition are the least demanding on speakers as they necessitate only a repetition of the previous utterance.

In addition, specific queries signal to speakers what information is required of them to resolve the breakdown. Spilton and Lee (1977), in their study in New York, examining the

conversational repair responses of 4-year olds, reported that specific queries were significantly better at obtaining adaptive responses. Said differently, repair responses were capable of resolving breakdowns, than general or neutral queries. This interdependent nature of clarification requests and types of repair behaviours both signal an impending conversation breakdown and a call for immediate repair. The foregoing views were applied in the current study in describing repair strategies adopted by teacher-counsellors and students with an aim of resolving breakdowns arising during group guidance and counselling sessions.

According to Bateman, Tenbrink and Farrar (2006), language interpretation is inherently highly flexible and context dependent. Linguistic terms and expressions typically need to be resolved against context in order to pinpoint their intended meanings. This process of flexible interpretation is often invisible to interlocutors; the unfolding dialogue and its context evidently provide substantial cues concerning just how underspecified meanings are to be filled out. Moreover, whenever there are difficulties in resolving interpretations, interlocutors are able to construct clarificatory interactions to construct common shared interpretations with considerable precision. Several mechanisms have been proposed in the linguistic literature for accounting for this facility (Yun, 2005). However, these remain fragmented and oriented to specific cases. This is particularly important in repair and can be regarded as a conceptual repair that frequently occurs in conversation.

The conceptual breakdowns and repairs under investigation in the present study could be simple or complex depending on the linguistic devices present. For example, simple breakdowns could be identified and repaired immediately in the same turn or the subsequent turn by using the self-initiation self-repair sequence or other-initiated self-repaired sequence (Schegloff, 1992; Yun, 2005). However, when they take the form of seemingly rhetorical questions (Rohde, 2006) they became complex and the listener could not in most cases accurately identify the trouble source leading to him initiating the wrong repair. According to

Rohde (2006), rhetorical questions typically have the structure of a question but the force of an assertion and are generally defined as questions that neither seek information nor elicit an answer. However, the complexity of the trouble sources and the repair strategies meant to address them need more investigation than could be covered in the current study especially, where multiple discourse units are involved. The foregoing studies facilitated the discussion and analysis of the conversation repair strategies and mechanisms as they were used in the group guidance and counselling discourse. These were repair strategies adopted by interlocutors to solve issues and minimise misunderstanding during the conversation. The literature reviewed also guided the second objective in identifying the participant who initiated the repair and who accomplished it.

## **2.6 Effects of Conversation Repair Strategies**

Different studies indicate that repair strategies have varied outcomes. According to Tye-Murray, (1991), most conversations are unduly interrupted by turns, whose meanings and intentions cannot be readily understood, and as such there is a tendency of the interlocutors to focus more on the turns than on the conversation at hand hence, they serve as a distraction than as a repair strategy. The use of requests for clarification as a repair strategy is made to seek better interpretation of the subject matter and also emphasise the point of discussion. It serves to improve understanding between conversational partners (Tye-Murray, Purdy, Woodworth & Tyler, 1990). The current study applied the foregoing views in examining effects of repair strategies interlocutors employed on guidance and counselling discourse. Specifically, this study sought to establish whether the repair strategies employed by teacher-counsellors and students resulted to better interpretation of the subject matter, emphasised the point of discussion and improved understanding among conversational participants.

With regard to effects of conversation repair strategies, Carsaro (1977) observes that some requests for clarification are considered specific, or contingent, for example, requests for

confirmation, whereas others like neutral queries are considered non-specific, or non-contingent. This is because the former is more articulated to the conversation and is easily interpreted, while the latter can at times be ambiguous. For example, specific requests can take the form of requests for confirmation of new information, such as, “Does he have a job?” requests for confirmation of already given information like, “Did you say he had a car?” and requests for elaboration, such as, “What colour was his car?” Non-specific queries are like, “What?” “Huh?” they make no reference to anything and are therefore vague. Carsaro (1977) identified clarification requests as serving different pragmatic functions in adult-child interactions in New York. Primarily, clarification requests made by adults were used to indicate communicative failures that occurred due to inaudibility or a lack of comprehension of the child’s utterance. However, he also observed that they functioned as conversational fillers, or as markers to indicate incredulity or acknowledgment of the child’s utterance.

Carsaro’s (1977) and the current study are similar as both investigated clarification requests made by the interlocutors indicated a communicative failure that occurred due to inaudibility or lack of comprehension of either parties’ utterance. However, whereas Carsaro’s study investigated clarification requests serving different pragmatic functions in adult-child interaction in New York, the current study examined the effects of clarification requests employed by teacher-counsellors and students during group guidance and counselling sessions in selected secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County, Kakamega County in Kenya.

Kenworthy (1984), asserts that contingent requests for clarification are more likely to sustain interaction over multiple turns than non-contingent requests since they are weightier and influence the conversation in the original direction. Other studies report that requests for specific clarification are viewed more favourably by the speaker than non-specific requests (Caissie & Gibson, 1997; Gagne, Stelmachovich & Yovetich 1991). Speakers find it easier to



respond to specific requests due to their direct nature since they are more concerned with the particulars of the issues being addressed. Strategies that elicit rephrasing by the speaker are more likely to repair the communication breakdown by seeking alternative words and phrases that are clear and easily understood in the conversation without necessarily affecting its flow (Gagne & Wyllie, 1989). The foregoing discussions guided objective three in examining the effects of repair strategies used by interlocutors on discourse during guidance and counselling sessions.

However, repair strategies employed and their effects are largely on the interactants' ability to accurately characterize the trouble source, their language competencies and the social communication context at play (Schiffrin, 1994). This is so because language is largely a social action and as observed in studies on discourse analysis including the current study, not all repairs were accurate and some repairs were abandoned as soon as it was perceived that the conversation was on track. The participants in the conversations did not necessarily have to wait until the repairs had run their full course owing to their shared world view (Rohde, 2006) or their need to construct the conversation meanings to suit them (Cicourel, 1980). Examining the effects of the conversation repair strategies was the third objective of the study and was instrumental in characterising the repairs used and providing insight on how successful the repairs were in refocusing the conversation during the guidance and counselling discourse. The literature reviewed on effects of repair strategies revealed that the effects vary and may determine the outcome of the conversation. Insights from the foregoing studies enabled the current study to establish if teacher-counsellors and students communicate more effectively when they employed more specific or contingent repair strategies during group guidance and counselling sessions.

## **2.7 Summary**

The success of guidance and counselling sessions depends on their objectivity and consistent flow of information. Guidance and counselling sessions are best constructed as conversational discourse if they are to achieve maximum effects. It is imperative to study the conversational nature of group guidance and counselling discourses and their elements in an attempt to identify inconsistencies that may lead to breakdowns and misunderstandings. However, it is noted that this linguistic feature which determines the nature of the conversation, and also by extension the mood has not been explored in the group counselling context especially that involving adolescents in Kakamega Central Sub-County of Kakamega County.

The literature reviewed revealed that the ability to identify and repair communication breakdowns is an essential pragmatic behaviour that influences the conversational roles played by speakers and listeners. With regard to effective communication, the study sought to examine discourse units that signal conversation breakdown in group guidance and counselling discourse. Further, the review indicates that interlocutors are able to identify and repair breakdowns using different repair strategies (Kenworthy, 1984; 1986; Yun, 2005). It was important to describe and analyse repair strategies that interlocutors employed during the natural conversations occurring during group guidance and counselling sessions involving adolescents. This is because studies done in conversation repair such as Garvey (1977) were mainly those of a one-on-one conversation. The literature reviewed also revealed that conversation repair has been studied in a classroom setting (Comeau, Genesee and Mendelson, 2007; McHoul, 1990). The gaps in the literature show that this study presented a new context, secondary school small group guidance and counselling sessions in Kakamega Central Sub-County, Kenya, within which the researcher sought to examine the effects of conversation repair strategies on group guidance and counselling discourse. Therefore, the

study sought to fill this knowledge gap by undertaking a study to examine specific objectives notably to; examine discourse units that signal conversation breakdown, describe repair strategies employed by teacher-counsellors and students as well as examine the effects of conversation repair strategies on discourse by counsellors and clients in secondary school students' group guidance and counselling sessions in Kakamega Central Sub-County, Kakamega County, Kenya.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter comprises eight subsections which include the research design, area of study, study population, sample size and sampling procedure, data collection, reliability and validity of data, data analysis and ethical considerations.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This was a qualitative research that set out to examine discourse units that signal conversation breakdown, describe repair strategies and examine the effects of conversation repair strategies on discourse during secondary school students' group guidance and counselling sessions. The study adopted analytical research design which is suitable for a qualitative research.

Analytical research design involves knowledge of the target language by the researcher, but rather than accessing intuitions directly, the researcher bases generalizations upon an independently collected data (Milroy, 1987). The researcher applied analytical design in identifying the underlying themes in the construction of the meaning of and in texts that were observed and recorded during teacher-counsellor and students' conversations as well as recordings of the face-to-face interview with teacher-counsellors.

#### **3.3 Area of Study**

This study was confined to effects of repair strategies used to resolve conversation breakdowns which forms part of the wider conversational analysis theoretical study area. The study chose an institutional setting where talk is structured along topics and the features of conversation being investigated were observed. Students' group counselling sessions were chosen because they were more interactive, well timed and semi-formal conversations on

particular topics. These topics were those affecting adolescents who are confronted with issues that they are not so conversant with or do not understand. In this study, Kakamega Central Sub-County was chosen among other areas by the researcher due to the availability of secondary schools which practise students' group counselling as a means of addressing the students' academic and social concerns. The area was also fairly accessible to researcher and this made the study manageable.

Kakamega is a town in Western Kenya which lies about 30 km north of the Equator. It is the administrative headquarters of Kakamega County (Kakamega District Strategic Plan, 2005-2010). In Kakamega Central Sub-County, there are seven public secondary schools and three private secondary schools. Eight out of the total ten secondary schools were selected for the study because they conducted students' group counselling sessions during the study period. Two schools were excluded since they did not conduct any guidance and counselling session during the study period. One school did not have the guidance and counselling programme in place while in the other, the teacher in charge had been transferred and the school principal had not appointed any other teacher to take over. The researcher used code names to refer to the schools because of ethical requirements.

### **3.4 Study Population**

The study targeted group counselling sessions conducted in the schools by teacher counsellors and student-counselees in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County. Two of the schools in the area did not practice group counselling for their students, thus, only eight schools were available for the study. The eight schools each conducted at least one group counselling session per month, however, three schools conducted six sessions during the five months of the study. Therefore, the total number of sessions available to the researcher was 43. The unit of analysis refers to those units that we initially describe for the purpose of aggregating their characteristics in order to describe some larger group or abstract

phenomenon Mugenda and Mugenda, (1999). In the current study, the unit of analysis was the utterances within the discourse during the group guidance and counselling sessions.

### **3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

This study derived its corpus from the group guidance and counselling sessions in the schools within Kakamega Central Sub-County which reportedly had a comparatively high number of student unrest despite the counselling sessions (Kabuka, Agak & Poipoi, 2011). Purposive sampling was used in this research to obtain the required sample size. Purposive sampling is useful in qualitative research especially in cases where the data illustrates characteristics of particular subgroups of interest and also comparison, and the investigator relies on his or her expert judgement to select units that are representative or typical of the population (Patton, 1999). The students' group guidance and counselling sessions were conducted once a month depending on each school's schedule. The study purposively sampled thirteen counselling sessions in eight secondary schools both private and public within the study area. The thirteen sessions constituted thirty percent of the forty-three sessions that were conducted during the time of the study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the minimum size of sample should be thirty percent of the population when using small populations.

The sessions used in this study were those that had been programmed to take place in the identified secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County. The sessions lasted between forty five minutes to one hour each and were all conducted in the afternoon. Afternoon was appropriate because there was adequate time for counselling sessions particularly during lunch break and after classes. Students in the sessions were those who had been identified by the teacher-counsellor and attended the group guidance and counselling sessions in the target schools. The teachers used in the study were the eight teacher-counsellors from the eight selected secondary schools in the sample. The sessions used in the study were those that the counsellor and the clients allowed the researcher to observe. These were small group

guidance and counselling sessions comprising between four to nine students and one teacher-counsellor. The group guidance and counselling sessions were well suited for the study because of their interactive nature which involved responses from the student-counselees and teacher-counsellors in order to arrive at solutions on important questions and problems. This enabled the researcher to observe the repair strategies.

### **3.6 Data Collection**

This section discusses the data collection methods employed in the study, which include non-participant observation, audio recording, and interviews. These methods are discussed in subsections 3.6.1, 3.6.2, and 3.6.3 respectively. The researcher recruited and trained two research assistants to aid in data collection and transcribing the data. These research assistants were necessitated by the period of time it took not only to wait for sessions but also to cover the eight selected secondary schools in the sample within the research period. Together with the researcher, they were non participant observers and sat in positions where they could take notes of the occurrences during the sessions while ensuring minimum interference with the sessions. The research assistants were graduates of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) in the field of Linguistics. Therefore, they had sufficient exposure to discourse analysis methods during their under-graduate studies. They were trained by the lead researcher on how to record the data using a Casio V6 digital audio recorder and to observe the relevant non-verbal features as well as how to take notes of significant non-verbal information that was used in the data analysis. After the sessions the researcher and her assistants compared the notes taken during the sessions while they transcribed the recorded data in order to improve the quality of the transcription.

During the actual study, the researcher visited the schools, and briefed the school principals about the research. The principals then referred the researcher to the school teacher-counsellors. Consequently, agreements were made on the dates, and days of data collection.

Further, the researcher scheduled data collection in two sessions. The first session involved collection of data from group counselling sessions between teacher-counsellors and students in the selected schools in Appendices I, II, III, IV & V. The second session was that of a face-to-face interview with the teacher-counsellors from the sampled schools in Appendix VII which was done by the researcher alone.

### **3.6.1 Non-participant Observation**

The researcher and her two research assistants were non-participant observers. Note taking, observation schedules and audio recording during the counselling sessions served different purposes but supplemented each other. These were used by the researcher and her assistants to record observable features in the sessions without breaching the ethical considerations of the study. They all sat strategically to be able to observe and record non-verbal features. The electronic recordings were done by the lead researcher alone while taking notes. The two assistants, however, captured the non-verbal features occurring in the interactions between counsellors and clients during the sessions by marking the observation schedules. However, at the transcription stage, the researcher and her assistants each made the transcriptions simultaneously and thereafter compared and reconciled them for clarity.

### **3.6.2. Audio Recording**

Audio recording was used to ensure that the data was captured and stored in its original form and was not distorted or tampered with in any way. All the thirteen guidance and counselling sessions were directly recorded from the eight selected secondary schools using this method. A Casio V6 digital audio recorder which is a high fidelity recorder was used. Audio recordings made using this instrument, afforded the researcher a closer and objective observation of the linguistic features in the sessions besides increased the precision of the transcriptions.



### **3.6.3 Key Informant Interviews**

Additional information was gathered through a face-to-face interview done by the researcher involving each of the eight teacher-counsellors from the eight selected secondary schools after each group counselling session. In the current study, an unstructured interview guide in Appendix VII was availed to guide the interview process and to collect data from teacher-counsellors in the eight sampled secondary schools. This was done for the purposes of gathering information on the approaches the teacher-counsellors apply during group counselling sessions, the challenges they face as they offer guidance and counselling services and how they overcome these challenges. Data from the interviews provided insights that were extracted and used to obtain additional information to interpret some of the observations, recordings and notes taken earlier during group counselling sessions. Further the interviews held gave the researcher an opportunity to do a follow up of some of the study findings.

Using the interview guide in Appendix VII, the researcher held eight interviews, one with each of the eight teacher- counsellors. To facilitate effectiveness of the interview and capture every detail during the interview, the researcher audio-recorded the conversation as it went on. In addition, the researcher took about 10 to 15 minutes to probe the counsellors further on the challenges they usually faced during the group counselling sessions.

### **3.7 Validity of Data**

The researcher first conducted a pilot study of the instruments before using them in the study. The pilot study was done in May 2013, in two secondary schools in the neighbouring Kakamega North Sub-County. These schools had characteristics similar to those selected in the study sample, but were not to be included in the main study sample. The researcher observed three group guidance and counselling sessions in the two pilot schools. The three

sessions took a time limit of between forty-five minutes and one hour. One school had one group counselling session while the other had two sessions within the month. Both internal and external validity was ensured by controlling the extraneous variables that also affected the dependent variable and also the sampling process to facilitate the generalizability of the findings. In the current study the extraneous variables like noise was avoided by requesting that the guidance and counselling sessions are held in quiet designated places. The use of high fidelity audio recorder and placing it in close proximity to the participants during the sessions also reduced the levels of noise interference.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

In this study, data collected was analysed using mixed method along thematic lines. However, the analysis was skewed towards qualitative method. Through this form of analysis, major topics were identified and categorised. Data collected was organised and categorised following qualitative content analysis. This was done by first extracting the utterances that constituted breakdowns and repairs within the transcribed conversations and analysing within the context. Titscher, Meyer, Wodak and Vetter (2000), observe that the core and central tool of any content analysis is its system of categories; every unit of analysis must be coded that is, allocated to one or more categories. Bryman (2004), posits that qualitative content analysis is probably the most prevalent approach to qualitative analysis, it comprises a searching-out of underlying themes in the material being analysed. He specifically defines qualitative content analysis as an approach to documents that emphasise the role of the investigator in the construction of meaning of and in texts. There is an emphasis on allowing categories to emerge out of the data and on recognising the significance for understanding the meaning of the context in which an item being analysed appeared.

In addition, Conversation Analysis (CA) procedure was used during data analysis. CA may be conceived as a specific analytic course which may yield insight in the ways in which members of society interact during conversation (Atkinson and Heritage, 1984). Data for study in conversation analysis must be actual talk occurring in natural contexts (Heritage, 1995). Conversation analysis is analysis of real-world, situated, contextualized talk. Since the system used in CA is specifically designed to reveal the sequential features of talk, the researcher examined the adjacency pairs as they occurred in the discourse. The process entailed the identification of the repair strategies following the typology set out by Kenworthy (1984) as well as additional patterns emerging from observations during the counselling discourse.

The first level of analysis involved transcription of the verbal content from the audio tape and subsequent selection of relevant pieces of corpus for investigation. This was done immediately after each counselling session to avoid the volume of work resulting from them. The second level involved identification of conversation repair strategies from selected excerpts. These were then grouped according to the conversation breakdown and repair categories identified in the study. The researcher was able to identify the conversation breakdowns, conversation repair strategies and repair categories through multiple reading of the transcripts. The researcher also used the notes taken from observations of non-verbal features to supplement analysis of the data. Transcripts of the face-to-face interview with teacher-counsellors were also used to compare responses by the participants of the group counselling sessions and provide additional narratives for explaining some of the occurrences in the sessions. These enabled the investigator to get a general sense of the information and began to capture important aspects of the data.

The categories identified the occurrence of communication breakdowns, the types of requests for clarification used by the subjects to resolve the breakdowns, as well as the types of repair

strategies provided by the interactants. Communication breakdowns were defined as interruptions in the flow of conversation resulting from the counsellor's or client's misperceptions of the partner's message. This included speaking turns where the subjects' misperception was evidenced by either their use of requests for clarification, inappropriate responses to the partner's turn, abrupt topic shifts, or inappropriate word.

Further, a distinction was made between those communication breakdowns that were followed by requests for clarification repair. The types of requests for clarification initiated by the subjects to resolve communication breakdowns was identified as either nonspecific requests for clarification or specific requests for clarification. Specific requests for clarification was further divided to include requests for repetition of a specific constituent and requests for a change in manner of presentation of the message. The interlocutor responses elicited by the requests for clarification were classified as exact or partial repetition, repetition of a specific constituent, confirmation, elaboration, and paraphrase. Data was analysed according to patterns of repair trajectory and specific repair types and whether or not the repair was successful. Finally, data were presented in prose.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

Before embarking on data collection in schools within Kakamega Central Sub-County, ethical considerations were taken and adequate assurance given to the respondents due to the sensitivity of the counselling sessions. For the purpose of this study, initial permission was sought from Maseno University Ethical Review Board. A research permit in Appendix VIII was obtained from the Maseno University Ethics Review Committee. From this authority, a letter of authorization was sought to allow the researcher carry out the study.

The researcher also sought permission from the Kakamega Central Sub-County Education Officer and a letter of authorization to visit schools in the area of study was obtained as in

Appendix IX. Furthermore, the researcher consulted the counsellors with a view to seeking verbal permission from the student-counselees to have the sessions recorded. The study also ensured maximum confidentiality and anonymity throughout so as to protect the informants' identities. The data from participating schools was assigned only serial numbers; hence, the information gathered was not directly attributed to specific sources. The researcher adopted the general tags teacher-counsellor (TC) and student (ST) in order to safeguard the right and privacy of the respondents. The eight selected schools used in study were coded as school 1-8. The data was then converted into a format that can be stored in the computer and protected using passwords. Evaluation results are to be made public after completion of the study for future researchers and other relevant stakeholders to guide them in their future work. For the participating schools, the information was to be made available through notes and comments on language use in counselling sessions.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This study set out to examine discourse units that signal conversation breakdowns, describe repair strategies employed by teacher-counsellors and students during group guidance and counselling sessions and examine the effects of conversation repair strategies employed by interactants during group guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County. This chapter is divided thematically according to the objectives namely; discourse units that signal conversation breakdown are presented, conversation repair strategies employed by counsellors and clients during counselling and the effects of conversation repair strategies on guidance and counselling discourse.

The chapter, therefore, first presents and analyses data in relation to the speech events and discourse units characterizing conversation breakdown. These are identified, analysed and discussed. The focus is on syntactic units and prosodic resources present in discourse involving the teacher-counsellor and the clients. Repair patterns and strategies that are self-initiated or repaired as well as other-initiated or repaired are then identified, analysed and their linguistic contents discussed. Finally, the chapter presents an analysis and discussion of the effect of conversation repair strategies employed by interactants on counselling discourse during group guidance and counselling sessions in eight selected secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County. Data has been presented and analysed based on the various categories of conversation repair strategies identified. Excerpts of the data were analysed to illustrate the occurrence of these conversation repair strategies and was followed by discussion of the findings. Before presentation, analysis and discussion of the data collected, this chapter presents the general characteristics of the corpus for analysis in 4.1.1.

#### **4.1.1 Features of the Corpus of Analysis**

The data used in this study is qualitative in nature and constitutes actual utterances made by the interactants during the group guidance and counselling sessions in the sample schools. In the current study, the unit of analysis was the utterances within the discourse during the group guidance and counselling sessions.

The corpus for analysis was derived from 13 accessible small group guidance and counselling sessions in the eight selected secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County, Kakamega County. The researcher derived more corpus from a face-to-face interview conducted with the eight teacher-counsellors from the sampled schools as in Appendix VII. The researcher transcribed five conversations in Appendix I-V which displayed conversational repair strategies. The guidance and counselling sessions took a duration of between 45 minutes and one hour each in the afternoons on different school days once a month depending on the schedule of the school. The first conversation in Appendix I, comprised 10 participants, five girls and four boys and one female teacher-counsellor who were discussing the personal shield. The second conversation in Appendix II was made of 5 members; 4 male students and one male teacher-counsellor who were discussing how to start an income generating project in school. The third conversation as in Appendix III comprised 9 participants; eight male students and one male teacher-counsellor who were discussing social problems affecting the students in school. The fourth conversation in Appendix IV had 5 members; four male school prefects and one female teacher-counsellor who were discussing prefecture issues in their school. The last conversation as in Appendix V comprised 9 participants; eight male students and one female teacher-counsellor who were discussing academic performance of the students. The conversation between the teacher-counsellor and students in Appendix I, was characterised with the highest number of turns which yielded 223 turns. The second highest conversation was in Appendix III which yielded

95 turns, the third conversation as in Appendix IV yielded 51 turns, the fourth conversation in Appendix V yielded 39 turns and lastly conversation B in Appendix II had the least number of turns which yielded 17 turns.

#### **4.2 Discourse Units that Signal Conversation Breakdown**

The first objective of this study was to examine discourse units that signal conversation breakdowns during group guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools within Kakamega Central Sub-County. Conversation is a social action meant to create social order. It produces much of the typifications underlying our known notions of social role (Cicourel, 1972). Cicourel, further, posits that conversation also manifests its own order and portrays its own structure. However, everyday conversation is characterized by breakdown (Schegloff, 1992). Conversation breakdown is caused by trouble sources occurring in a conversation which are likely to or actually disrupt its order (ten Have, 1999). In the present study, typical conversation breakdowns were identified in the conversations recorded. In an effort to do so, 13 group counselling sessions were recorded in the 8 selected secondary schools where the study was carried out. This was done so as to account for the first objective of this research as stated in chapter one. The conversation breakdowns that emerged in the study are listed and discussed in sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2, and section 4.2.3.

##### **4.2.1 Conversation Breakdown**

Natural conversation is characterized by breakdowns occurring spontaneously. A conversation breakdown occurs when a message is not properly conveyed among participants and as a result the conversation is blocked. These breakdowns may be overcome with various repair activities by either speakers or listeners. Trouble sources which cause conversation breakdown to the participants could be placed anywhere during the communication process. The present study sought to examine discourse units that signalled conversation breakdowns as they occurred in group guidance and counselling discourse. A closer look at the discourse



units that signalled conversation breakdown indicated that various conversation breakdowns were caused by different trouble sources during group guidance and counselling. In relation to objective one, findings on the discourse units are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1: Summary of Conversation Breakdown during Guidance and Counselling Sessions**

<b>Conversation Breakdowns</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Trouble Sources</b>
Mishearing	6	21	Inaudibility, Mispronunciation
Inappropriate word	6	21	Performance, Semantics, Grammar
Insufficient information	5	17	Paucity of information, lack of knowledge, semantics, elaboration
Vagueness	3	11	Lack of clarity, lack of details
Misunderstanding	2	7	Contextualization, Inaudibility, mispronunciation
Statement of incorrect information	2	7	Lack of specification, Break of pattern
Incomprehension	2	7	Semantics
Misperception	1	3	Semantics
Interruption	1	3	Inappropriate turn
Change of topic	1	3	Misunderstanding, mispronunciation
<b>Totals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100</b>	

**Source:** Field observation data (2013)

The results in Table one suggest that the most pronounced conversation breakdowns observed in all the 13 group guidance and counselling sessions were incidences of mishearing twenty one percent and use of inappropriate words also twenty one percent. However, other conversation breakdowns such as insufficient information seventeen percent, vagueness eleven percent, misunderstanding seven percent statement of incorrect information seven percent incomprehension seven percent, misperception three percent, interruption three percent and change of topic three percent which were identified in the group guidance and counselling sessions recorded, were experienced at a minimal level. For instance, misunderstanding, statement of incorrect information, incomprehension, misconception, interruption and deviation cumulatively accounted for only thirty percent of the total twenty

nine breakdowns recorded as shown in Table one. These conversation breakdowns are discussed with examples in the following sub-sections 4.2.1.1, 4.2.1.2, 4.2.1.3, 4.2.1.4, 4.2.1.5, 4.2.1.6, 4.2.1.7, 4.2.1.8 and 4.2.1.9

#### 4.2.1.1 Mishearing

The observed trouble sources of mishearing were inaudibility and mispronunciation. Mishearing in this study refers to hearing a person who is speaking or the utterance incorrectly. Inaudibility refers to a situation where a participant spoke too quietly to be heard by the hearer. While inaudibility as a TS of mishearing was easily recognized by the participants and dealt with, the effects of mispronunciation were ignored by the participants as they tried to fit in the conversation, (Heritage, 1984a,1984b) until it became evident that the conversation was deviating from the topic of discussion. This is made clear in excerpt one. Excerpt one was drawn from a self- referral case where four students in a boys' secondary school sought to consult their teacher- counsellor on an income generating project they intended to begin at school. During the consultation, the students wanted to be guided by their TC on how to carry out an intended project in Appendix II.

Excerpt (1)

Line	Speaker	Trouble Source	Text
i	TC		What do you want or how can I help you?
ii	ST 1	low tone	We want to start a show to interrogate people ↓
iii	TC		Speak up! ↑
iv	ST 2		we are intending to start a show to interrogate people like one for Oprah ↑
v	TC		Oho... You are saying about a show, I heard about a shop ((laughing)) yeah I get it.

In excerpt 1, it is evident that mishearing on the part of the teacher-counsellor was caused by the student speaking in a low tone prompting the teacher to request the student to raise his voice. Put differently, the teacher initiated the repair which was other-initiated and self-

repaired (Schegloff *et al.* 1977). This finding is consistent with earlier studies by Schegloff *et al.* (1977) showing that the reasons for inaudibility vary and could be deliberate. For instance, where the speaker is uncertain of his answer or the reaction it may elicit. The utterance in line iii “Speak up!” was used to address the inaudibility of the previous speaker which caused a mishearing on the part of the teacher-counsellor. The response of the addressee confirmed this when he not only raised his voice but also modified his earlier statement by availing more information to the hearer in line iv. The repair confirmation in line v where the teacher says ‘Oho... You are saying about a show, I heard about a shop (laughing) yeah I get it’ shows that there was mishearing which was self-repaired in line iv.

#### 4.2.1.2 Inappropriate word

In the current study, the use of inappropriate words entailed words that were mismatched out of inadequate linguistic performance which led to conversation breakdown. These were mostly caused by the problem of language performance of the participants as evidenced in excerpt two. Excerpt two comprised nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives’ aspirations and limitations and how they ought to handle them as in Appendix III.

Excerpt (2)

Line	Speaker	Trouble Source	Text
I	TC		What is your ambition?
ii	ST 1	inappropriate word	I want to be an industrial <b>chemistry</b> .
iii	TC		<b>CHEMISTRY?</b>
iv	ST 1		Chemistist.
v	TC		It is good you have identified what you want to be.

In line ii, of excerpt two the student inappropriately referred to industrial chemist as ‘industrial chemistry’. The student’s lack of ability to appropriately use the English language could not enable him (student) find an appropriate classifier prompting the teacher to initiate

a repair (other-initiated) by employing specific constituent repetition strategy by repeating the word ‘chemistry’ as a question indicating trouble in the student’s utterance in line ii. However, the student’s repair (self-repair) of the classifier using the word ‘chemistist’ which still falls short of the correct word needed that is ‘chemist’ nevertheless, the teacher waives it possibly as a result of understanding the student’s problem of language use.

Schegloff *et al.*, (1977) posit that a repair can be initiated either by the speaker of the problematic talk (self-initiated repair) or by another speaker (other initiated-repair). The repair may then be carried out by the speaker of the problematic (self-repair) or by the other speaker (other-repair). Failure to repair the last bit and instead confirm the response is itself an indication that interactants in the session tended to operate on the premise of a shared environment. This may agree with Heritage (1984a, 1984b) who posits that this is the situation where more preference is placed on the understanding of their world; that is the norms and rules of conversation and their meaning rather than the language conventions used during the conversation.

When asked whether the language used during guidance and counselling presented a significant problem, the interview respondent (teacher-counsellor) observed that during guidance and counselling sessions, expressing one’s self in certain languages was not always easy especially in a second or foreign language.

You see, these students come from different backgrounds. Some speak English only when they are in school but at home they speak mother tongue or their first language. Like these ones their first language is Kiswahili and you see some are still in form one. However much you insist that they speak in English you still find one borrowing one or two words from their first language. During the guidance and counselling sessions, I am never strict with the language used because I want these students to speak freely and interact with one another. If I force them to speak in English throughout the session, some do not talk and if they talk they end up misusing some words (Interview with teacher-counsellor, 2013).

The teacher-counsellor's assertion is consistent with the findings which revealed that students had a problem with the English language used during counselling sessions. There were incidences of use of inappropriate words, for instance, 'chemistry' in line (ii) and 'chemistist' in line (iv) (cf excerpt two in the current section) which were indications of the language performance problem that even led to the borrowing of words from another language Kiswahili 'kusikianjaa' as in excerpt five in Sec. 4.2.1.5 and even silences in excerpt eight in Sec. 4.2.1.8 were experienced during conversations.

#### **4.2.1.3 Insufficient Information**

Insufficient information also manifested itself as a common conversation breakdown whereby a speaker gave less information than is required which resulted to a misunderstanding in the group guidance and counselling discourse demanding a repair for proper conversation flow. Excerpt three comprised eight form one and two students from a boys' secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning social problems that positively or negatively affected their learning and life in school and how they sought to handle them in Appendix III.

Excerpt (3)

<b>Line</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Trouble Source</b>	<b>Text</b>
i	ST 1	Insufficient information	Theft, some of the seniors steal mattresses. You can imagine the time you waste for the mattress.
ii	TC		Only theft for mattress?
iii	ST 2		Sometimes you find your box has been broken into.
iv	TC		Theft in the boarding section. Do we also have theft in the tuition block?
v	ST		Yes. ((in unison))

In excerpt three, insufficient information given by the student in line i by mentioning theft of mattresses, was the cause of breakdown in the conversation. In line ii, the teacher-counsellor

asks “only theft for mattress?” This other-repair initiation by the TC meant that theft is a broad term meaning that theft can not only be of mattresses. In other words, the TC expected more and specific information from the speaker in relation to what else was stolen and where else theft was experienced within the school compound. The student’s response in line iii is still not elaborate according to the TC. This is indicated in line iv where the TC asks another question probing for more when he says ‘Theft in the boarding section. Do we also have theft in the tuition block?’ Studies such as, Caissie and Gibson, (1997) and Gagne, Stelmacovich and Yovetich (1991) report that requests for specific clarification are viewed more favourably by the speaker than non-specific requests. Speakers find it easier to respond to specific requests due to their direct nature since they are more concerned with the particulars of the issues being addressed. Therefore, the TC was asking for clarification about theft so that he could understand its weight as the problem or challenge students face in school.

However, it can be observed that not all breakdowns were noticed by the interlocutors, for example in line i “...you waste for the mattress.” was incorrectly phrased by the student instead of, “ you waste looking for the mattress.” The subsequent reply by the teacher, “.....theft ‘for’ mattress?” instead of “...theft ‘of ‘ mattresses?” in line ii made no attempt to correct the grammar in line i and instead repeated the same error while focusing on the issue at hand which was seeking more information from the student.

#### **4.2.1.4 Vagueness**

Vagueness refers to a situation where the speaker uses a word, phrase or sentence that is unclear because he or she does not give enough detailed information or does not say exactly what he or she means. Excerpt four was drawn from a group of four student leaders (Form 1-4) from a boys’ secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor various challenges they faced in school as prefects and how they tried to overcome them as in Appendix IV.

Excerpt (4)

<b>Line</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Trouble Source</b>	<b>Text</b>
i	TC		So, which of you made it to captain?
ii	ST		((2 STs raise hands))
iii	TC		..and the others?
iv	ST 3	vague	Compound.
v	ST 4	vague	Class
vi	TC		class what?
vii	ST 4		Class prefect, 3North.
viii	TC		Ohoo...

In excerpt four, the initial trouble source was the students' responses in turns in line (iv) 'compound' and in line (v) 'class' which were vague because the teacher could not easily perceive the students' utterances. A vague sentence permits an unspecifiable range of possible interpretation (Crystal, 1985). It is evident that the students' responses did not give details concerning their appointment. Therefore, it was difficult for the teacher to understand and interpret their utterances which were unclear. Being newly elected student leaders, they understood the context of the discussion and what they were being asked about. However, the teacher wanted the students to give additional information in their responses to eliminate the vagueness. This made the TC initiate a repair (other-initiated) by asking for specification 'class what?' in line vi implying that the answer she had been given was incomplete. Through self-repair, student 4 in line vii corrected the vagueness caused in his previous utterance by saying 'class prefect Form 3 North.'

Further finding in excerpt four depict the central aspect of conversation organisation which is consistent with theoretical framework particularly the concept of adjacency pairs. Schegloff and Sacks (1973) called these sorts of paired utterances 'adjacency pairs' and these adjacency pairs is the basic unit on which sequences in conversation are built. Adjacency pair, are pairs

(or occasionally trios) of utterances which are contingent upon each other and intrinsically ordered. Examples are: question and answer, and apology and acceptance. Adjacency pairs have a number of core features which can be used by way of a preliminary definition. The conversation in excerpt 4 consist adjacency pairs ‘question and answer’ which are contingent upon each other and intrinsically ordered. The responses were made both verbally lines iii, iv, v and vii and non-verbally ii raising of hands which is a paralinguistic feature. This finding is also consistent with early studies which observed that TRPs are marked by signals which can be either verbal for example, a question, a marker such as “you know”, reduced pitch, reduced loudness, reduced intonation, or non-verbal for example, changing gaze direction (which typically returns to the listener at this time (Graddol, *et al.*, 1994; Kendon, 1967; 1990;), or other body language cues. The conversation also portrayed the core features of adjacency pairs listed by (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973).

#### **4.2.1.5 Misunderstanding**

Misunderstanding conversation breakdown was as a result of mishearing by the listener and mispronunciation by the speaker during conversation as shown in excerpt five. Excerpt five was drawn from a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives aspirations and limitations and how they could handle them as in Appendix I.



Excerpt (5)

Line	Speaker	Trouble Source	Text
i	TC		Your greatest fear?
ii	ST 1	Mispronunciation	I fear Hunger
iii	TC	Mishearing	Getting annoyed yourself or annoying others?
iv	ST 1		I fear to be hungry
v	TC		To be angry yourself?
vi	ST		<i>Kashia njaa</i> , HUNGER. (in unison)
vii	TC		ooh (.) hunger, ooh (.) hunger.

Referring to excerpt five, it is clear that both interactants were talking at cross purposes or continued deviating from the subject under discussion (Yun, 2005). The teacher's mishearing of the word 'hunger', /hʌŋgər/ referring to lack of food especially for a long period of time, and misunderstanding it as 'anger' /æŋgər/ meaning a strong feeling of wanting to hurt someone made her proceed with the discussion in spite of it being evident that she had misheard and misunderstood the student. The teacher's deviation from the topic of discussion was due to mishearing and misunderstanding breakdown. It actually took the intervention of other participants to remedy the conversation to the preferred contextual order. The repair mechanism adopted in this discourse was other-initiation (by the TC) and other-repair (by other students in the group).

The findings in excerpt five are consistent with studies reviewed in the current study. Linell (2009) asserts that misunderstandings are usually attributed to recipients exclusively as it has been observed that listeners fail to get what the speaker said during the interaction. It is not only the utterances that can be misunderstood, but rather utterances with reference to making assumptions and expectations. In addition, Tzanne (2000), observes that "misunderstandings may be as a result of the differences in the linguistic systems of the interlocutors" According to Yun (2005), sometimes speakers are unable to trace some of the errors in conversation and

at times proceed with the conversation without any remedial action at all. This can lead to interlocutors deviating from the topic of discussion as noted in excerpt five. Contrary to Yun’s assertion, it is possible for interlocutors to realise the source of trouble at advance stages as seen in line vii of excerpt five.

#### 4.2.1.6 Statement of Incomplete Information

Excerpt six was drawn from a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives aspirations and limitations and how they could handle them. In this session, the teacher counsellor adopted a structured discussion focusing on the four pillars of the personal shield used in counselling namely; achievement, ambition, fears and affection as in Appendix I. She began by instructing the students to write out answers on these four pillars and then proceeded to interrogate each of them on the same. A specific instance of a statement of incomplete information that could lead to a conversation breakdown was observed during this session in the exchange between the counsellor and a student called Dismass. This is captured in excerpt six.

Excerpt (6)

Line	Speaker	Trouble Source	Text
I	TC	Incomplete information	Now we go to ((Dismass)) ((pointing at the next speaker))
ii	ST 1		((Silence))
iii	TC		I want something that you can say that up to now you’ve been able to do.
iv	ST 1		A good planner.
V	TC		((Purity)) you share a class, is he a good planner?

In excerpt six, the conversation breakdown emanates from the teacher’s utterance in line i when the teacher counsellor says ‘Now we go to ((Dismass))’ as she points at the next speaker. In this particular session, it was normative for the teacher-counsellor to introduce the

next speaker to hold the floor using the question “what is your achievement?” The counsellor broke the norm of conversation while introducing ((Dismiss)) and also gave incomplete information, hence, rendering her utterance in line i vague. Apparently, ((Dismiss)) could not immediately comprehend this change in the order and thus, was momentarily silent probably because he did not comprehend the teacher’s statement in line i due to lack of correct information. This type of silence occurring at has been defined as a gap by Heldner and Edlund (2010) who refer to them as shorter silences between turns. The function of this type of silence as in the present case could be attributed to the speaker having difficulty deciding, not what to verbalize, but how to verbalize something (Chafe, 1985). This was so since the student already knew what to say as he had either written it down or thought about it as he had been instructed. The presence of the breakdown was here confirmed by the teacher’s attempt to repair the conversation in a way that implied that the student ((Dismiss)) ought to have followed the convention used in the session.

#### **4.2.1.7 Incomprehension**

Incomprehension was understood to mean a situation where a listener did not comprehend what the speaker said. Excerpt seven was drawn from a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives aspirations and limitations and how they could handle them as in Appendix I.

Excerpt (7)

Line	Speaker	Trouble Source	Text
i	TC		What is your fear in life?
ii	ST 1		war in the country.
iii	TC		Why would you fear war in the country?
iv	ST 1		Because when there is war you can't concentrate in education
v	TC		so you are saying that with war you cannot concentrate in studies?
vi	ST 1		Yes.
vii	TC		Suppose war broke in Kakamega what would you do? How would you go about it?
viii	ST 1	incomprehension	((silence))
ix	TC		What are you doing to ensure there are no wars?
x	ST 1	incomprehension	((silence))
xi	TC		One thing is that you should preach peace in your area and everywhere

In excerpt seven, the initial trouble source was the teacher's questions 'Suppose war broke in Kakamega what would you do? How would you go about it?' in line vii and the question 'What are you doing to ensure there are no wars?' in line ix. The student being addressed, clearly understood the war and its consequences line i to vi but did not understand how she should respond when war broke out in Kakamega where she currently was line vii or how to prevent it line x as she was simply a student. Moreover, the student may have understood war at national and international levels but could not localise it to Kakamega being a small sub-county in Kenya. So she could have chosen to keep quiet in both occasions as she did not know how to respond appropriately as indicated in lines viii 'silence' and x 'silence'.

The presence of incomprehension in this case was confirmed by the teacher initiating repairs twice, the first in line vii as an attempt to clarify what she meant in line vi and the other to

answer the question herself when she says ‘One thing is that you should preach peace in your area and everywhere.’ line xi. The student’s silence was situation-specific silence as classified by Enninger (1987) and was influenced by contextual demands. The student’s behaviour clearly, did not emanate from rudeness for in line i through to line vi she was cooperative in the conversation and even afterwards when the teacher had resolved the issue. The teacher-counsellor’s statements after the student’s failure to respond could suggest that the TC was not offended and she took that the student did not understand the questions.

The findings confirm literature reviewed where by Maslamani (2011) posits that where silence does not belong to a particular speaker, it may become quite prolonged, and may result in a lapse in the talk. However, where silence is attributable to an individual participant, it is likely to be repaired if it becomes too long (Maslamani, 2011). Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) listed three types of silences: ‘pauses’, ‘gaps’, and ‘lapses’. ‘Pauses’ are silences that occur within a single turn, ‘gaps’ occur at a transition relevance place (TRP), and ‘lapses’ occur at a TRP when talk discontinues and the floor is not claimed by any of the fellow participants (Nakane, 2007). In excerpt seven the type of silence that occurred at a (TRP), was a ‘gap’ and the floor was claimed by the teacher-counsellor. The teacher claimed the floor in line vii and line ix for she assumed that the student did not understand what she was talking about and also to ensure the flow of the conversation to an appropriate direction where she could initiate a closing turn.

#### **4.2.1.8 Misperception**

Misperception refers to a conclusion that is wrong because it is based on faulty thinking. According to Crystal (1987), misperception is a mistaken belief, idea or interpretation about something such as love in the case of this study. It can result from flawed understanding of the subject matter or the intentions of the speakers in the conversation. The cues that a speaker may use to attempt to signal a particular social meaning may not be the cues that the

hearer focuses on, leading to misperception. Excerpt eight illustrates this. It was drawn from a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives aspirations and limitations and how they could handle them as in Appendix I.

Excerpt (8)

<b>Line</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Trouble Source</b>	<b>Text</b>
i	TC		Whom do you love most?
ii	ST 1		My father
iii	TC		Why not your mother?
iv	ST 1	Misperception	Because he provides me with everything I want
v	TC		Suppose your mother provides you with everything, would you love her more than your father?
vi	ST 1		Yes I would love both.

In excerpt eight, the conversation breakdown emanates from the teacher's perception of student's view about the word 'love' used by the teacher in line i when the TC asks 'Whom do you love most?' The student's misperception of the concept 'love' is that love is connected to provision. Thus, according to her the parent who provides her with everything she wants is the one she should love. The teacher counsellor sought to repair the misperception in line v by encouraging the student to also view her mother as a potential provider. However, this repair was incomplete as it did not dispel the student's notion of love being conditioned on provision. Being a counselling session, the teacher attempted to disillusion the students view on the tradability of love, that is, love was meant to reciprocate provision. The student was unable to correctly respond to the teacher's question 'Why not your mother?' in line ii. Instead of saying why she does not love her mother, she says why

she loves her father ‘Because he provides me with everything I want’ in line iv. Further, her response ‘Yes, I would love both’ in line vi could suggest that the student had not yet changed her perception on the conditionality of her affections towards people. Thus, it is evident that the teacher misperceived the social viewpoint of the student on the basis of her (the student’s) intent

#### 4.2.1.9 Interruption

Interruptions observed in the counselling conversations were also trouble sources that substantially affected the flow of the conversation as shown in the following segment in excerpt nine. An interruption is an act in which a new speaker starts a turn while the current speaker has not yet reached a possible point of completion in his turn, to the effect that a smooth switch between speakers is made impossible (Zhao, Barnett, Cai & Crane, 2001). Excerpt nine was drawn from a group of four student leaders (Form 1-4) from a boys’ secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor various challenges they faced in school as prefects and how they tried to overcome them. This data is about how especially they dealt with cases concerning fellow students in school as in Appendix IV.

Excerpt (9)

Line	Speaker	Trouble Source	Text
i	ST 1		Yeah! ((giggling)) I found my stuff had been messed up?
ii	TC		Did you find who did it?
iii	ST 1		No, but...[
iv	TC	interruption	[Did you report to the teacher or deputy?]
v	ST 1		You know, madam, we tried to investigate ourselves so that we don’t report to the deputy everything.

In excerpt nine it can be seen that the student’s line of thought in line iii was interrupted by the counsellor’s interrogative in line iv. The student obviously wanted to give his account of the way he, together with other students, dealt with the situation. The counsellor’s interruption in line iv, by asking ‘Did you report to the teacher or deputy?’ was meant to

assert an institutional procedure of dealing with such occurrences. It was not the teacher's right to speak following the conventions of turn-taking which allows one speaker to speak at a time (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974). While she was seeking to reinforce an agreed reporting procedure through her interruption, the student was trying to inform her how they handled such incidences in their day to day life. The teacher's interruption was to the effect that a smooth switch between them was not possible (Zhao, Barnett, Cai and Crane 2001). According to Fraser, (1990) dispreferred responses are generally softened through the use of 'mitigation devices', such as: delay, use of markers such as "well", appreciations, justifications, explanations, and insertion sequences. In order to avoid a dispreferred response, the instigator of an adjacency pair will often pre-sequence, for example pre-inviting such as, "Are you busy tomorrow?" (ten Have, 1999). There was a problem in the foregoing conversation because the adjacency pair sequence was not orderly due to the teacher-counsellor's interruption. The student tried to soften the teacher's dispreferred response by using the marker 'you know' in line v.

#### **4.2.1.10 Change of Topic**

Change of topic in group guidance and counselling was as a result of misunderstanding among interlocutors as shown in excerpt ten. Excerpt ten was obtained from eight form one and two students from a boys' secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning social problems that positively or negatively affected their learning and life in school and the how they sought to handle them as in Appendix III.



Excerpt (10)

<b>Line</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Trouble Source</b>	<b>Text</b>
i	TC		You have not talked about food. Does food affect your studies?
ii	ST 1	Change of topic	What I can say about food is that it is ok but there is much time wasted on the queue in the dining.
iii	TC		But the food itself is it good for consumption? Does it give you problems?
iv	ST 1		No, it is just ok it is enough for you to keep you going.
v	TC		aha...

In line i of excerpt ten, the teacher posed a general question to the student but was evidently seeking a specific answer line iii. The student answered the question in the context of which he had been asked saying that the food was okay but noting that it took unnecessarily long for them to get served, hence, causing them to lose valuable time that they could have used for studying. The teacher appears to have thought that the student had deviated from the topic of discussion when he stated as part of his answer to the original question, ‘but there is much time wasted on the queue in the dining.’ The teacher may not have expected the student to discuss the issue of meal serving but rather the student to elaborate on the type and quality of food hence, he reframed the question in line iii. The reframed question in line iii was meant to address the issue of food quality which was what he was interested in but failed to specify in line i The reframing of the question from a non-participant observer’s point of view was unnecessary as the student had already given a clear answer but from the teacher’s point of view it appeared unsatisfactory and likely to steer the conversation to another aspect which was the management of queues during mealtime. In other words the teacher appeared to be interested in ‘what’ food was being served and not ‘how’ it was served. The breakdown was

repaired when the student answered what had been asked in line iii saying, ‘No, it is just ok it is enough for you to keep you going.’ This seems to have addressed the issues of food quality and quantity that the teacher was seeking. According to Yun (2005), sometimes speakers are unable to trace some of the errors in conversation and at times proceed with the conversation without any remedial action at all.

Apart from the actual observed breakdowns Table one, the study also identified minimal discourse units responsible for conversation breakdowns. These were mainly syntactic and prosodic in nature discussed in section 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 respectively.

#### **4.2.2 Syntactic Units in Conversational Breakdown**

Syntactic and prosodic units were identified as the units featuring prominently in segments of conversation where a breakdown was imminent or underway during group guidance and counselling discourse. From the data collected, examples of syntactic units of discourse identified were adjuncts and interrogatives. Their occurrence in conversation segments signalled the need for conversation repair. They are notable for their locations in the turns which are considered important places in conversation (Sacks *et al.*, 1974). It is at the boundary where projection of the Turn Construction Unit (TCUs) is displayed by current speakers to which the next speakers orient when taking over their turns. These are characterised in excerpts eleven.

Adjuncts occurring at the end of a sentence could be a source of trouble as illustrated in the excerpt eleven. Excerpt eleven was drawn from a group of four prefects (Form 1 - 4) from a boys’ secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor various challenges they faced in school as prefects and how they tried to overcome them as in Appendix IV.

Excerpt (11)

<b>Line</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Trouble Source</b>	<b>Text</b>
i	TC	adjunct	Do you believe you can be leaders later in life?
ii	ST		Mhh? ((in unison))
iii	TC		I was asking if you believe you can be leaders LATER ON.
iv	ST 1		Yes, because I believe I have the potential.
v	ST 2		Yeah, since I aspire to be one.
vi	ST 3		Also I know I can become one.

In excerpt eleven, it can be seen that the adverbial adjunct ‘later in life’ at the end of line i created a trouble source as it led the students to initiate a repair, the intoned neutral query mhh? in line ii. The subsequent repair by the teacher with another adverbial adjunct ‘later on’ which is a modified version of the former (later in life) seems to have little effect as evidenced by the responses that followed from the students. In the first instance, the adverbial adjunct was treated as a trouble source causing some misunderstanding. In the latter case, the hearers treated it as inconsequential and proceeded with the conversation oblivious of its presence as evidenced by their responses which made no reference to it. The adjuncts emerging in excerpt eleven are typical substantive units which, as described by Chafe (1994), convey ideas of events, states or referents. In this case the adverbial adjunct “later in life” expresses the speaker’s view of leadership as something futuristic. However, it can be observed that this view was not readily accommodated by the listeners which became a trouble source prompting repair initiation although Payne (2006) had pointed out that adjuncts are structurally dispensable in the sentence.

Misplaced interrogatives observed in the counselling conversations were also trouble sources that substantially affected the flow of the conversation as shown in the following segment in excerpt twelve. Excerpt twelve was drawn from a group of four student leaders (Form 1-4)

from a boys' secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor various challenges they faced in school as student leaders and how they tried to overcome them. This data is about how they particularly dealt with cases concerning fellow students in school as in Appendix IV.

Excerpt (12)

Line	Speaker	Trouble Source	Text
i	ST 1		Yeah!( giggling) I found my stuff had been messed up?
ii	TC		Did you find who did it?
iii	ST 1		No, but...[
iv	TC	interrogative	[Did you report to the teacher or deputy?]
v	ST 1		You know, madam, we tried to investigate ourselves so that we don't report to the deputy everything.

In excerpt twelve, it can be seen that the student's line of thought in line iii was interrupted by the counsellor's interrogative in line iv. The student obviously wanted to give his account of the way he, together with other students, dealt with the situation. Rohde (2006) argues that when repair strategies take the form of a seemingly redundant interrogative, they become complex and the listener could not accurately identify the trouble source leading to him initiating a wrong repair. The counsellor's interruption by a seemingly redundant interrogative in line iv, was meant to assert an institutional procedure of dealing with such occurrences. While she was seeking to reinforce an agreed reporting procedure, the student was trying to inform her how they handle such incidences in their day to day life. In essence, the student's answer is actually an attempt to downgrade the magnitude of the situation by suggesting it did not warrant the intervention of the school authorities.

### 4.2.3 Prosodic Units in Conversational Breakdown

In this study, prosodic units likely to cause breakdowns were observed as entailing lowered voices or pitch on certain words, phrases or whole sentences during the on-going interlocution. Intonation units are identified in terms of major intonation boundaries (a sequence of syllables grouped by a final accent carrying a high tone projecting “more to come” or a low tone signalling finality), which are usually signalled by the presence of a silent pause (Mertens, 1993). In excerpt thirteen, a low tone was identified as a potential trouble source in a conversation and could indicate uncertainty; this could give rise to mishearing and compel interactants to repair the conversation using raised tones usually accompanied by adjuncts. This is demonstrated in the following segment thirteen. Excerpt thirteen was drawn from a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives aspirations and limitations and how they sought to handle them as in Appendix I.

Excerpt (13)

Line	Speaker	Trouble Source	Text
i	TC		Tell us what you have written as your great achievement
ii	ST 1	Low tone	I have not [wr...↓
iii	TC		[What?]
iv	ST 1		I have not written. ↑
v	TC		Ok, I will start from this side.((pointing to another speaker on the left hand side)) What have you written as your greatest achievement in life?

In line ii of excerpt thirteen, the student used a low tone to express his uncertainty. The teacher obviously heard her speak but could not make out the content of her utterance and hence resorted to the neutral query ‘What?’ as Kenworthy (1984; 1986) classifies the strategy. The teacher’s repair initiation meant that he had not heard what the speaker said and

was requesting for clarification. Contrary to Mertens (1993), this is a case where a falling intonation in a turn created a breakdown rather than close the conversation or signal finality. The student expected the teacher-counsellor to complete what he was saying and did not expect a turn at this point. This was against the adjacency rule where a question is expected to be followed by an answer. Though the speaker had given the answer, it was incomplete and inaudible prompting the listener to initiate a repair by raising his voice. The raised voice of the student to clarify his answer was meant to repair the conversation breakdown. The student's response in line iv may not have been the answer the teacher expected but the teacher's use of the pre-closing sequence "ok" accompanied by a falling intonation solved the breakdown as indicated in line v whereby the teacher selected another speaker. This finding is consistent with earlier studies by Mertens (1993) and Paltridge (2000) who observed that finality in conversation was indicated by a falling intonation and was less formulaic.

Despite having cases of breakdowns, there were instances where, as in excerpts fourteen and fifteen where teacher-counsellors and students had conversations without experiencing breakdowns. Excerpt fourteen was drawn from a group of four student leaders (Form 1-4) from a boys' secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor various challenges they faced in school as student leaders and how they tried to overcome them. This data is about how the student leaders especially dealt with cases concerning fellow students in school as in Appendix IV.

Excerpt (14)

<b>Line</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Text</b>
i	TC:	hey! You people know how to keep time!
ii	ST:	Yes, madam ((in unison))
iii	ST 1:	you know today we have dorm meetings, so we wanted to see you first.
iv	TC:	Oh... Today is Tuesday?
v	ST:	Yes. ((in unison))
vi	TC:	Then you make yourselves comfortable. We shall try to be brief. Now you move your chair here ((pointing at the place)). ((students drag chairs)) Ok. So, which of you made it to captain?

Excerpt fifteen was derived from a group of eight form two boys from a boys' secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor their academic performance. The TC was more concerned because the boys had dropped in their performance. In their discussion they were trying to come up with possible solutions to improve their marks as in Appendix V.

Excerpt (15)

<b>Line</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Text</b>
i	TC	Today, we shall discuss issues regarding academics. You all come from 2 Green isn't it?
ii	ST	((all nod in agreement))
iii	TC	I looked at your performance in the CATs and I saw we needed to talk <i>sindiyo</i> isn't that so?
iv	ST	Yes ((in unison))
v	TC	You see, now, academics is the most important, eeh? If you people come to school and you don't get good marks, and you are in form two, eeh?
vi	ST	((all nod in agreement))

From the foregoing examples, it is evident that the counselees were at ease with their TC during their conversations. This could be because of the amicable welcoming words as in line i of excerpt fifteen used by the TC at the beginning of the session which may have created a good rapport among them. From these examples, the study concluded that if all sessions began with words of encouragement or time keeping, then cases of inconsistencies and misunderstanding could be minimised.

Regarding the challenges TCs faced during group guidance and counselling sessions one of the respondents interviewed observed the following:

It is true that some of these students are afraid to talk to us. Some will talk in low tones, keep quiet or even look aside. That is why at the beginning of every group guidance and counselling session I conduct, I have to take some time to encourage the members to open up and share their experiences. I usually assure them that all that is said during the discussion shall be kept secret. Although, I must admit that some of us teachers never practice what we say. You know we are all different and unique in the way we handle issues (Interview with teacher-counsellor 2013).

The foregoing findings are consistent with studies by Omizo and Omizo (1998) who argue that most adolescents have concerns about confidentiality, which will impact on their willingness to discuss personal issues with the counsellor and it is important that they be assured that the confidentiality, more specifically that the contents of the counselling sessions will be upheld. Findings from data collected in objective one, show that one breakdown led to another in the same conversation. Excerpts 1 to 13 demonstrate the fact that breakdowns are a feature of natural conversation that can easily affect the flow of conversation. This was evidenced by the observation that the participants often noticed the breakdowns and initiated repairs in an attempt to maintain the relevance of the conversation by creating order within it. Excerpts 1 to 13 also suggest that in natural conversation, more emphasis by interlocutors is placed on the concept of language performance in a shared environment, unless the conversation breakdown clearly jeopardizes the future context of the conversation. In other



words, how the participants in the conversation viewed the context or believed the conversation should work (Paltridge, 2000) largely dictated the extent to which a conversation breakdown could be tolerated.

### **4.3 Conversation repair strategies employed by counsellors and clients during guidance and counselling discourse in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-county**

The second objective of this study was to describe repair strategies teacher-counsellors and students employed during group guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools within Kakamega Central Sub-County. Conversation repair is a universal phenomenon that informs us of the general nature of human communication through language. Typical spontaneous conversation is characterized by frequent instances of “broken” language segments. Schiffrin (1994) observes that for a conversation to produce its own order, it has an abundance of “repair”. Fox *et al.*, (1994) define repair as any instance in which an emerging utterance is stopped in some way, and is then aborted, recast, or redone. In this way, the conversation remains tractable. However, the repairs need to be strategically employed in the conversation to achieve a more meaningful order in the discourse. This is so because some of the repairs themselves given that they create turns that can actually become additional sources of conversational breakdowns as the interactants will tend to place more emphasis on the turns than the conversation at hand (Tye-Murray, 1991).

Conversation strategies occur frequently in conversations and serve to articulate, repair and direct the conversation to ensure better flow of the discussion at hand, understanding and communication. Kenworthy (1984) developed a typology of repair strategies which are commonly used by the interactants to facilitate the flow of the conversation. However, only five out of the nine conversation repair strategies listed in his typology featured in the data for the present study. They included; request for repetition, neutral query, request for

specification, request for clarification and other repetition. These repair strategies are discussed in the following subsections.

#### **4.3.1 Request for Repetition**

The study first sought to establish the occurrence of requests for repetition as a conversation repair strategy. Repetition is the reoccurrence of the same word or phrase as a rhetorical device. Repeating is one of the performances in speech, which is often observed in naturally occurring conversations. Previous studies show that repetition first facilitates the production of speech (Tannen, 1987), second, provides a context for a problematic talk to be repaired (Johnstone, 1994; Hosoda, 2000; 2006), and third, contributes to smoother interaction by showing attentiveness (Tannen, 1987). In particular, the current study focused on describing and analysing the practice of the repair type of repetitions by interactants in group guidance and counselling discourse. Further, the study sought to examine the effects of request for repetition as a repair strategy on discourse during conversations.

According to Garvey (1977), the requests for repetition could be specific or non-specific. Tye-Murray *et al.*, (1990) share this view when they observe that some requests for clarification are considered specific, or contingent, for example, requests for confirmation, whereas others like neutral queries are considered non-specific, or non-contingent. This is because the former is more articulated in the conversation and is easily interpreted while the latter can at times be ambiguous. The use of requests for repetition was employed to seek better interpretation of the subject matter and also emphasise the point of discussion. The request for repetition serves to improve understanding among participants during conversation. These occurrences are discussed in excerpt 16.

Excerpt sixteen was drawn from a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives aspirations and

limitations and how they sought to handle them. The topic of discussion was about how to apply the personal shield to overcome various challenges they faced in school and outside school as in Appendix I.

Excerpt (16)

<b>Line</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Breakdown Type</b>	<b>Repair Strategy</b>	<b>Text</b>
i	ST 1			Ok, I fear an accident. ↓
ii	TC			what would you fear?
iii	ST 1			Getting injured, lame... [
iv	TC	Vague		And supposing you are involved in an ACCIDENT, what would you do?]
v	ST 1		request for repetition	Mhh? ↑
vi	TC		R	Aaah...I was asking, supposing you are involved in an ACCIDENT, how would you take it?
vii	ST 1		RC	I will learn to live with it and accept. ↓

From the conversation in excerpt sixteen, the trouble source emanates from incomprehension on the part of the student in the question posed by the teacher in line iv by saying “And supposing you are involved in an ACCIDENT, what would you do?” The student could not understand what the teacher meant by ‘what would you do?’ given that he had already made his position on accidents and their outcomes known in line i and iii. The student, therefore, initiated a repair by uttering a pitched neutral query “Mhh?” in line v. The use of the neutral query “mhh?” with a raised tone served as a speech act and was interpreted by the teacher as a neutral request for repetition. The teacher repeated her question but in a rephrased form to make it clear. This is confirmed by the student in line iv. A non-specific request was used by

the student and ended up eliciting a specific response in the form of a rephrased statement from the teacher.

This finding is in agreement with the arguments advanced by Caissie and Gibson (1997) who argue that speakers find it easier to respond to specific requests due to their direct nature since they are more concerned with the particulars of the issues being addressed. The confirmation of the repair by the student was informed by early studies reviewed. Gagne and Wyllie, (1989) posit that strategies that elicit rephrasing by the speaker are more likely to repair the communication breakdown by seeking alternative words and phrases that are clear and easily understood in the conversation without necessarily affecting its flow.

Excerpt seventeen is another example which illustrates the use of rephrasing during group guidance and counselling and the outcome. Excerpt seventeen was drawn from a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives aspirations and limitations and how they sought to handle them as in Appendix I.

Excerpt (17)

<b>Line</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Trouble Source</b>	<b>Text</b>
i	TC		Now who do you love most?
ii	ST 1		My father
iii	TC		You love your father most? Why not your mother?
iv	ST 1		It is unfortunate that she is dead.
v	TC		Ok, your mum passed away (.) sorry! You have now been left with one parent eh... I now know that your mum passed away. It is good to have someone you love

The data shows an example of a TC restating succinctly and tentatively what the speaker said- conveying empathy, acceptance and genuineness. An example of rephrasing in the data

used is shown in line v. The word 'dead' used by the student was paraphrased by the TC through the statement 'your mum passed away' followed by a short pause then the word 'sorry' followed which indicated that the TC was empathetic. The teacher-counsellor initiated a repair by employing request for specification strategy in line iii by asking 'You love your father most?' 'Why not your mother?' The teacher-counsellor wanted the student to specify the parent she loved more. The student's response 'It is unfortunate that she is dead' in line iv indicate that she would have loved her mother if she was a live. The strategy that was employed made both interlocutors understand the conversation and respond easily due to its direct nature and being more concerned with the particulars of the issue that was being addressed. This finding is consistent with studies such as (Caissie & Gibson, 1997; Gagne, Stelmacovich & Yovetich, 1991) who report that request for specific clarification are viewed more favourably by the speakers than non-specific requests.

When asked about techniques TCs employed during group guidance and counselling sessions, one teacher-counsellor noted as follows:

Oh, yes, during guidance and counselling discussions, I rephrase or repeat what my students have said. When I rephrase or repeat the words used by the students it conveys my empathy, acceptance and genuineness. I can use an alternative word or phrase which sounds polite. I do this to show them that I feel for them. Many of the students find it easy now to talk about their personal issues (Interview with teacher-counsellor, 2013).

This interview report agrees with the data collected which revealed that TCs employed rephrasing repair strategy as a way of conveying empathy acceptance and genuineness during group guidance and counselling. The foregoing findings are consistent Okobia (1991) who observes that listening forms the basis upon which other higher-level helping responses are built. Okobia opines that active listening on the part of the counsellor conveys the impression that he or she is genuinely interested in helping the client to solve his problem and that the client is unconditionally accepted, regarded and valued.

### 4.3.2 Neutral Query

The study further sought to establish the occurrence of the neutral query as a conversational repair strategy for instance, 'what?' or 'Huh!' Excerpt eighteen was derived from a group of eight form two boys from a boys' secondary school who were discussing their academic performance with their teacher-counsellor. The teacher-counsellor was more concerned because the boys had deteriorated in their performance. In their discussion they were trying to come up with possible solutions to improve their marks as in Appendix V.

Excerpt (18)

Line	Speaker	Breakdown Type	Repair strategy	Text
I	TC:	insufficient Information		In setting or achieving your goals what hinders you?
ii	ST 1		Neutral query	what? ↑
iii	TC			Well, (.) what challenges do you face here in school that may be contributing to your poor performance?
Iv	ST 1			My main challenge is discouragement from other students. For example in Physics since it is my weakest they tell me I can't make it.

Unlike in the earlier conversation as in excerpt one where the trouble source evidently emanated from the inaudibility of the speaker, in excerpt eighteen, the trouble source was the teacher availing insufficient information. The student expected specific clarification from the teacher, especially what he meant by setting and achieving goals. The teacher-counsellor's question was non-specific which prompted the student to employ a neutral query 'What?' in line ii seeking clarification or additional information on the statement in line i made by the teacher-counsellor 'In setting or achieving your goals what hinders you?' This probably

meant that the student did not comprehend the teacher's statement and was seeking clarification or additional information. The teacher-counsellor repaired the statement by employing specific clarification strategy and paraphrased the entire statement as well as specified what he was asking for in line iii by saying 'Well, (.) what challenges do you face here in school that may be contributing to your poor performance?' The student's response 'my main challenge is discouragement from other students.' in line iv shows that the question was now clearly understood since the student not only mentioned the challenge but also specified as well as clarified it. This finding is consistent with Gagne and Wyllie (1989), who report that strategies that elicit rephrasing by the speaker are more likely to repair the communication breakdown by seeking alternative words and phrases that are clear and easily understood in the conversation without necessarily affecting its flow. The characteristic of the neutral repair strategy that emerges in this instance is the ambiguity of the neutral repair as opposed to the straight forward nature of the request for repetition.

#### **4.3.3 Request for Specification**

Requests for specification also emerged in the discourses as repair strategies. According to Garvey (1977), these requests occur where the hearer wants the speaker to give details of specific parts in the conversation to disambiguate a concept. However, it emerged that the use of this strategy was also dependent on the participants' ability in using the English language as illustrated in excerpt 19 as in Appendix I.

Excerpt nineteen was drawn from a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives' aspirations and limitations and how they sought to handle them. The topic of discussion was about how to apply the personal shield to overcome various challenges they face in school and outside school.

Excerpt (19)

Line	Speaker	Breakdown Type	Repair strategy	Text
i	TC			What is your greatest fear?
ii	ST 1			Commit murder. ↓
iii	TC			To? ↑
iv	ST 1	Vague		Commit murder. ↑
v	TC		Request for specification	Murdering somebody or yourself?
vi	ST 1			Just any.
vii	TC			why?
viii	ST 1			My mum tells me always that if you murder somebody his or her spirit will always haunt you.

In excerpt nineteen, the teacher counsellor sensed ambiguity in the student's statement that the ST feared committing murder as the statement did not suggest any potential victims. Her request for specification elicited a similar response from the student, despite the obvious conceptual misunderstanding as one cannot murder oneself. The teacher counsellor did not understand the full meaning of her request for specification which could have easily distorted the conversation. However, the student did not notice the conceptual problem in the teacher's query and proceeded to repair it by repeating the same words 'commit murder'.

According to Bateman, Tenbrink and Farrar (2006), this is due to the fact that language interpretation is inherently highly flexible and context dependent. Linguistic terms and expressions typically need to be resolved against context in order to pinpoint their intended meanings. This process of flexible interpretation is often invisible to interlocutors; the unfolding dialogue and its context evidently provide substantial cues concerning just how underspecified meanings are to be filled out. Moreover, whenever there are difficulties in resolving interpretations, interlocutors are able to construct clarificatory interactions to home



in and construct common shared interpretations with considerable precision. In addition, Yun (2005) points out that this is common in natural conversation where interactants may fail to initiate a repair either because they fail to notice it, or because they deem it unimportant to the flow of conversation as long as both feel that they subscribe to a shared environment.

#### **4.3.4 Request for Clarification**

Request for clarification on misconceptions held by interlocutors during group guidance and counselling sessions also emerged as a conversation repair strategy. In the current study, misconception refers to a conclusion that is wrong because it is based on faulty thinking. It results from incorrect thinking or flawed understanding. A clarification is an interpretation that removes obstacles to understanding. In her study about contingent queries in New York, Garvey (1977) identified clarification request as unsolicited contingent queries that were made by the listener to the speaker to indicate communication breakdown. However, the clarification request observed in this study was not made as a straightforward question rather it was expressed by stressing the unclear word or statement. Excerpt twenty exemplifies this finding. Excerpt twenty was drawn from a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing matters concerning their lives and how they sought to handle them with their teacher-counsellor. The topic of discussion was about how to apply the personal shield to overcome various challenges they faced in school and outside school as in Appendix I.

Excerpt (20)

<b>Line</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Breakdown Type</b>	<b>Repair Strategy</b>	<b>Text</b>
i	TC	Vague		What is your greatest achievement?
ii	ST 1			Passing exams.
iii	TC	Misperception	Request for clarification	No, something that you have achieved, you are yet to do your exams.
		Misperception		What can you count and say you have achieved up to now?
iv	ST 1			Passing my exams.
v	TC			Oh, improving. Ok, ok Aha, what is your ambition?

In excerpt twenty, the teacher counsellor's question in line i was not clear in her statement whether she was asking for the student's social or academic achievements. As indicated in line iii, the TC did not count passing exams like class 8 as an achievement, when she says 'what can you count and say you have achieved up to now?' The student's response was specific and clear because it gave her world view as a student. However, the teacher counsellor misperceived the student's response "passing exams" in line ii and did not considered it as a culmination of the student's life achievement so far since she had not sat for her Form 4 final exams. The teacher-counsellor's misperception is shown in her statement 'No, something that you have achieved, you are yet to do your exams' in line iii. This is a conclusion that is wrong because it is based on faulty thinking on the part of the teacher-counsellor.

This finding is consistent with the definitions by early studies about misconception by Caramazza (1998) who says that misconceptions are mixed conceptions or conceptual

misunderstanding which require repair. This student's second response 'Passing my exams' in line (iv), might have made the teacher counsellor understand that the student was talking about her consistency in passing exams as her major achievement in life. This is confirmed by the TC's statement 'Oho...improving, ok, ok.' in line (v) which was an indication that the student had not done her Form 4 final exams rather she had improved in her academic performance. The student's insistence on her response made the TC change the misperception about the student's achievement. This finding is also consistent with the literature reviewed in the current study. Bateman *et al.*, (2006) point out that language interpretation is inherently highly flexible and context dependent. This is an important aspect in repair as it aids the interactants in finding or deriving meanings to certain words or ideas in such a way that they may become relevant to both. These repairs are dependent on both the knowledge of the world and the linguistic knowledge of the participants. In this conversation, it was evident that the TC had misperceived the student's understanding of the meaning of achievement.

#### **4.3.5 Other Repetition**

Repetition of the trouble-source by the addressee can help identify the problem and is often used to invite correction or express disagreement and disbelief, or even address a misconception. Other Repetition strategy occurs when the hearer quietly repeats what the speaker has uttered in the previous turn perhaps with an intention of confirming that assertion (Kenworthy, 1986). In the current study, this phenomenon of conversation was instrumental in addressing a misconception in the trouble source as illustrated in the excerpt 21. Excerpt 21 was composed of eight form one and two boys from a boys' secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning social problems that either positively or negatively affected their learning and life in school and how they ought to handle them as in Appendix III.

Excerpt (21)

Line	Speaker	Breakdown Type	Repair Strategy	Text
i	TC			...who else has social problems?
ii	ST	Insufficient information		The seniors, you find that they always make noise.
iii	TC		Other repetition	Noise from seniors? Do we have also noise from the juniors? Do juniors also make noise in class? Do we limit the noise to seniors only?↑
iv	ST			No
v	TC			It can also extend to the juniors. So noise is a contributing factor. ↓

In excerpt twenty-one, the teacher repeated the student's assertion that noise in their classes always emanated from the seniors (probably referring to the neighbouring senior students). The use of the phrase "Noise from the seniors?" served to denote the trouble source in the student's statement which the teacher-counsellor thought was misleading. This, in effect, confirmed the existence of a trouble source as Yun (2005) suggests inviting correction of the statement with the appropriate answer from the student. The TC's repeated questions about juniors and seniors in line iii is an indication that not only seniors can be culprits but also juniors. The repetition by the 'other', the TC was meant to express disagreement with the student's opinion which appeared biased as well as correct the wrong assumption held by the student. On the question about communication problems encountered by participants during guidance and counselling sessions, one teacher-counsellor pointed out that:

Well, there are many communication problems we encounter during guidance and counselling session. Sometimes a student can say something which the teacher misinterprets and vice versa. In such cases, the teacher and the student continue talking about different things from the topic of discussion. What I do in my sessions is that I listen keenly to my speaker, directly look at the student and nod where necessary to the speaker. This indicates that I am actually following what he or she

is saying. I also repeat the words of the student and ask whether I heard him or her correctly. If the answer is 'yes' we proceed with the discussion and if the answer is 'no' then I pardon the student and ask him or her to repeat what he said. By doing this I ensure that we are all moving together (Interview with teacher-counsellor, 2013).

This interview report with teacher-counsellor is consistent with the data which revealed that TCs upheld distinct listening skills required during group guidance and counselling sessions. The findings show that listening keenly, eye contact, nodding and repetition strategy were employed by interactants. This finding is consistent with Okobia (1991) who opines that active listening on the part of the counsellor conveys the impression that he or she is genuinely interested in helping the client to solve his problem and that the client is unconditionally accepted, regarded and valued. This was an indication that the participants were following each other's utterances which minimised the occurrence of breakdown, misunderstanding and inconsistencies during group guidance and counselling sessions.

The findings current study show that all requests identified in objective two, particularly those describing repair strategies employed by teacher-counsellors and students during counselling discourse, took the form of questions. Questions are a part of language that is used to obtain information. Questions during group guidance and counselling sessions can help to open new areas for discussion, assist to pinpoint an issue and they can assist to clarify information. The type of information gathered and the way it is gathered depends on the questioning techniques used. During guidance and counselling sessions with students, an effective teacher-counsellor should be knowledgeable about the different questioning techniques including the appropriate use of them and results to address the client's main issue (Egbochuku, 2008). The following excerpts which were extracted from the data collected in the current study, show examples of the types of questioning techniques employed by teacher-counsellors and students during group guidance and counselling. Excerpts twenty-two (a) was drawn from a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were

discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives and how they sought to handle them. The topic of discussion was about how to apply the personal shield to overcome various challenges they faced both in and outside school. The following are examples of open-ended questions and closed-ended questions which emerged from the data collected.

Excerpt 22 (a)

TC : What makes you love your mum?

ST : My mum gives me good advice about life and how to overcome challenges.

TC : That is good but it is also good to have love for your father.

Excerpt 22 (b) was obtained from 4 Form four boys from a boys' secondary school who were discussing how to start school income-generating project with their teacher-counsellor in Appendix II.

Excerpt 22 (b)

TC : What will you be doing?

ST : We want to be interviewing people about the emerging issues like drug abuse and such.

TC : With such a thing you need something called a proposal showing what you intend to do and cover. Also you need to have the questions ready and pilot yourself.

Excerpt twenty-two (c) was obtained from eight form one and two boys from a boys' secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning social problems that positively or negatively affected their learning and life in school and the how they sought to handle them in Appendix III.

Excerpt 22 (c)

TC : May you go further, how does it affect you?

ST : You see the environment, the air in class there is dusty, and you see it affects the health of students, the oxygen is somehow limited.

TC : The inhalation affects you (.) good

Excerpt twenty-two (a), (b) and (c) illustrate open-ended questioning technique that was employed by teacher-counsellors and students during group guidance and counselling discourse. The way the adjacency pairs were ordered ‘question-response’ kept the storyline on. The interlocutors’ use of open-ended questioning allowed them to interact freely, disclose deeper information that includes feelings, thoughts, attitude and understanding of the subject being discussed. This is consistent with early definition by Egbochuku (2008) that open-ended questions are those that cannot be answered in a few words, they encourage the client to speak and offer an opportunity for the counsellor to gather information about the client and their concerns. The finding also depict the structure of open-ended question as indicated by Egbochuku (2008) who observes that typically open-ended questions begin with words like ‘what’, ‘why’, ‘how’ or ‘could’.

Excerpt twenty-three (a), and (b) were composed of eight form one and two boys from a boys’ secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning social problems that positively or negatively affected their learning and life in school and the how they sought to handle them as in Appendix III.

Excerpt 23 (a)

TC : Theft in the boarding section. Do you also have theft in the tuition block?

ST : Yes

Excerpt 23 (b)

ST : Still the positive factors, the library has all the reference books, course books and even magazines and students can have studies without the teacher.

TC : Do you use it?

ST : yes.

TC : Do you think it is helping?

ST : Yes

Excerpt, twenty-three (a), and (b) show how closed-ended questioning technique was used. The topic of discussion in the conversation ended immediately the response was

confirmatory. This could be because close-ended questioning does not allow clients to expand on statements or provide deeper information about themselves. This finding concurs with the definition about closed-ended questions by Egbochuku (2008) who describes them as those questions that invite limited responses like 'yes', 'no', or 'don't know'. When using closed-ended questions it is usually met with a closed answer response that is, a response which does not allow any further explanation. The current study observed that questioning strategy was adopted by interlocutors in every session observed and recorded. To the interview respondents, this was a technique that was commonly used which also resulted to positive outcome of the conversation. When asked about the type of questions they preferred, one of the respondents pointed out that:

Questioning technique is used by most counsellors. In my guidance and counselling sessions I like asking my students open ended questions. This type of questioning encourages an ongoing storyline. Even you, if you ask me a question that requires a yes or no answer I'll give you the answer and we end our conversation. Closed Questioning technique closes the students. When I ask them such questions they give a yes or no answer and they keep quiet. I cannot get any information from them with closed questions. This being a school programme, sometimes they feel compelled to attend. This is why I have to probe them through open ended questions so that I encourage them to go on with the discussion (Interview with teacher-counsellor, 2013).

The foregoing findings on objective two, to describe conversation repair strategies employed by teacher-counsellors and student during group guidance and counselling sessions, are consistent with Rohde (2006) that some interrogatives could become complex and the listener could not in most cases accurately identify the trouble source leading to the listener initiating the wrong repair. This shows that this repair type can be more complex especially when the trouble source is not clear to one of the interactants who in an attempt to initiate repair, ends up creating other trouble sources.



#### **4.4 The effects of conversation repair strategies on students' guidance and counselling discourse in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-county**

The third objective of this study was to examine the effects of conversation repair strategies on the group guidance and counselling discourse in secondary schools within Kakamega Central Sub-County. Repair strategies employed by interlocutors and their effects, largely depend on interactants' ability to accurately characterize the trouble source, their language competencies and the social communication context at play (Schiffrin, 1994). In the current study, effects of the repair strategies used in the conversations were varied. Some were noted as causes of additional trouble sources in the conversation. This was probably so because language is largely a social action and as observed in Schiffrin (1994; 1988) as well as in the current study, not all repairs were accurate and some repairs were abandoned as soon as it was perceived that the conversation was on track.

Moreover, the repair preferences noted by Schegloff *et al.*, (1977) such as “self- initiated other-repaired, self-initiated self-repaired, other-initiated self-repaired and other-initiated other-repaired” were also observed as in excerpts (i, iii and v). The study examined these in terms of the effects of the repair strategies on the discourse and on the resolution of trouble sources so that the conversation could be sustained. The current investigation found out that repair strategies enhanced the conversation by eliminating mishearing and also, by extension, the issues of clarity. Excerpt 24 illustrates this.

Excerpt twenty-four was drawn from a self- referral case where four students in a boys' secondary school sought to consult their teacher- counsellor on an income generating project they intended to begin at school. During the consultation, they wanted to be guided by their TC on how to go about it as in Appendix II.

Excerpt (24)

Line	Speaker	Repair Mechanism	Repair strategy	Text
i	ST			We want to start a show to interrogate people. ↓
ii	TC	other Initiated	request for repetition	To..? Speak up! ↑
iii	ST	Self-repair		We are intending to start a show to interrogate people like that one of Oprah. ↑
iv	TC		RC	Oooh! You are saying about a show I heard about a shop (h)... yeah I get it.
v	ST			We want to have arrangement on how I will be conducting it mainly on Sundays since that is when many people are free.
vi	TC			So, how exactly do you want to run it? The Oprah style or?
vii	ST			Yes.

In excerpt twenty-four, the teacher counsellor used an imperative utterance “speak up!” to initiate a repair to the student’s inaudibility. In response, the student raised his voice to a more audible level as evidenced by the teacher making no further requests for audibility. The student’s use of a low voice at the beginning of the turn possibly indicated uncertainty rather than a finality in his response. The teacher’s use of the speech act was meant to encourage the student to speak whatever was in his mind without fear. In the subsequent turns, the observation that there were no further requests for audibility confirms this. Raising the voice to an audible level also made the speaker’s thoughts to become clearer. However, he did not attempt to elaborate on his answer. The manner in which the utterance “To..? Speak up!” in line (ii) was used might have encouraged the student to restate his statement without the need for additional information. In other words the teacher counsellor’s statement was construed

by the student as a request for repetition. The request placed a demand on the ST which is consistent with the view of Ora (2003) that requests for clarification place unique demands on the speaker when a communication breakdown occurs in conversations. This finding is consistent with the arguments advanced by Garvey (1977) that non-specific requests or neutral requests such as “huh?” and “what?” generally elicited a repetition of the original utterance by the speaker. The repair mechanism/preference used in excerpt 24 was other-initiated self-repaired.

The instances of repair are analyzed according to who initiates the repair and who produces the completion of the repair. Schegloff, *et al.*, (1977) have made a distinction between self- and other-initiation and self- and other repair respectively. The term ‘self’ refers to the participant who is speaking and ‘other’ refers to the recipient. This distinction clarifies the actions in repair sequences, because repair initiation and repair can be produced either by the speaker or by the recipient. For example, the speaker can either recognize a need to clarify his/her own turn of talk (self-initiated and self-repaired) or after the recipient has requested clarification for the turn (other-initiated and self-repaired). In line ii the teacher-counsellor initiated a repair (other initiated) consequently the counsellee repaired in line iii (self-repaired). In line iv the TC confirms the repair, an indication that there was clarity as the conversation continued without any further trouble.

Repairs on inappropriate words in the conversation were partially successful as evidenced in the following conversation in excerpt twenty-five. Excerpt twenty-five comprised eight form one and two boys from a boys’ secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning social problems that positively or negatively affected their learning and life in school and the how they sought to handle them as in Appendix III.

Excerpt (25)

Line	Speaker	Repair Mechanism	Repair strategies	Text
i	ST			When I was discouraged your self-esteem lowers but if you have a friend you can...some...
ii	TC	other Initiated	neutral query	Some...?
iii	ST	self-repair		You can also help yourself by giving your self some morale so that it doesn't go below the level that is required

In excerpt twenty-five, it is clear that the student lacked the ability to use the English language appropriately as manifested in his misuse of the possessive pronoun 'your' in line i, when uttering the statement "when 'I' was discouraged 'your' self-esteem lowers". However, this was not the breakdown that attracted the teacher-counsellor. The teacher counsellor was more concerned with the incomplete thought and made a neutral query to enable the student to complete it by stating 'some...?' in line ii. This shows that sometimes there might be a trouble source within a conversation that is overlooked by the participants as observed by Yun (2005). In excerpt twenty-five, it appears the need for more information was more recognisable than the earlier breakdown and the need to resolve it.

Identification of the exact trouble source in some cases, would introduce more trouble sources, hence complexity in repairing the conversation as shown in excerpt twenty-six where a misunderstanding was not amicably resolved. Excerpt twenty-six was drawn from a session involving a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives aspirations and limitations and how they sought to handle them as in Appendix I.

Excerpt (26)

Line	Speaker	Repair Mechanism	Repair Strategy	Text
i	TC			What is your greatest fear?
ii	ST			I fear God
iii	TC	other- initiated	request for repetition	Fear God? I think you respect God
iv	ST	self- repair		Ok. I fear an accident
v	TC			what would you fear?

According to line i in excerpt twenty-six, the teacher posed a question to the student but had his own conception of ‘fear’ which he thought the student understood. The student, in his response did not use the word the teacher-counsellor expected the student to use. The teacher then attempted to repair it using the word “respect” instead of “revere” which could have been a more precise word for the attitude toward God. This is what the student was trying to express but lacked an appropriate term for it. The student’s change of his concept of fear is an obvious indication that the teacher counsellor had not provided sufficient information about the attitude towards deity. The change in the concept of fear by the student was also meant to repair the earlier statement in line ii. This, however, did not suggest confirmation of the teacher-counsellor’s repair in line iii. This finding is consistent with Schegloff (2000), who argues that by using repetition to initiate repair on another person’s talk, the speaker indicates that the person has trouble in hearing or understanding what was said, or that the other person may have mispronounced in some way. This excerpt therefore, indicates that the TC’s repetition ‘fear God’ that is, other-initiation mechanism (Schegloff *et al.*, 1977) in line iii, shows that the student did not understand the TC’s question. The student confirms this when he changes his object of fear to ‘accident’ that is, self-repaired (Schegloff *et al.*, 1977), in line iv. Therefore, from the foregoing discussion, it can be said that some repairs may create more trouble sources in a conversation instead of resolving them.

Another form of complexity arose when attempting to repair conceptual misunderstanding. Attempts at this would also create trouble within the same turn as shown in excerpt twenty-seven. Excerpt twenty-seven was drawn from a group of nine students from a mixed secondary school who were discussing with their teacher-counsellor matters concerning their lives aspirations and limitations and how they sought to handle them as in Appendix I.

Excerpt (27)

<b>Line</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Repair Mechanism</b>	<b>Text</b>
i	TC		What is your fear in life?
ii	ST 1		war in the country.
iii	TC		Why would you fear war in the country?
iv	ST 1		Because when there is war you can't concentrate in education
v	TC		So, you are saying that with war you cannot concentrate in your studies?
vi	ST 1		Yes.
vii	TC	Other-initiated	Suppose war broke out in Kakamega what would you do? How would you go about it?
viii	ST 1		((Silence))
ix	TC		What are you doing to ensure that there are no wars?
x	ST 1		((Silence))
xi	TC	Other-repair	One thing is that you should preach peace in your area and everywhere. Who do you love most?

In excerpt twenty-seven, the initial trouble source was the teacher's questions 'Suppose war broke out in Kakamega what would you do? How would you go about it?' in line vii and the question 'What are you doing to ensure there are no wars?' in line ix. The student being

addressed, clearly understood the war and its consequences line i to vi but did not understand how she should respond when war broke out in Kakamega where she currently was line vii or how to prevent it line x as she was simply a student. Moreover, the two questions posed to her addressed two different situational contexts in which probably she had no prior experience. The student could have chosen to keep quiet in both occasions probably because the topic had become complex and could not understand so she did not know how to respond appropriately as indicated in lines viii ‘silence’ and x ‘silence’.

The presence of incomprehension due to the complexity of the subject matter in this case was confirmed by the teacher initiating repairs twice, the first in line vii as an attempt to simplify the subject matter in line vi and the other to answer the question herself when she says ‘One thing is that you should preach peace in your area and everywhere.’ line xi. The student’s silence was situation-specific silence as classified by Enninger (1987) and was influenced by contextual demands.

Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) listed three types of silences namely ‘pauses’, ‘gaps’, and ‘lapses’ as cited in (Nakane, 2007). ‘Pauses’ are silences that occur within a single turn, ‘gaps’ occur at a transition relevance place (TRP), and ‘lapses’ occur at a TRP when talk discontinues and the floor is not claimed by any of the fellow participants (Nakane, 2007). The student’s silence may be interpretable as an indicator of some problem, on one hand the complexity of the topic of discussion. On the other hand, it was an indication that the student was unsure of the answer to the questions the teacher asked.

Further studies by Jaworski report that silence and pauses should be treated as a key phenomenon which contributes to building the structure of discourse in the same way speech does (Jaworski 1993, 1997). Silence “is capable of expressing a whole range of discursive and propositional meanings” (Jaworski, 2005, p. 3).

Therefore, in excerpt twenty-seven, the teacher counsellor was forced to initiate a repair as well as repair it so as to facilitate the flow and continuity of conversation rather than continuing to probe the student for an answer which was not forthcoming. The teacher-counsellor repaired the breakdown in line ix and xi in order to break the resounding silence by controlling the turn. The repair mechanism in excerpt twenty-seven was other-initiated and other-repaired whereby the teacher-counsellor initiated a repair and repaired it. This finding is contrary to Schegloff *et al.*, (1977) who posited that interactions among native speakers (NS) of English demonstrated a preference for self-initiation and self-repair over other-initiation and other-repair. It can be argued that the repair mechanism applied is dependent on the subject matter, participants and the language they use during the guidance and counselling conversation. That is whether they are NS or NNS of the language used during the conversation.

#### **4.4.1 Paralinguistic features in group guidance and counselling**

It was important to observe the clients' body language. Body language exhibits various paralinguistic features. This became an important way of participants communicating their feelings and thoughts during group counselling sessions. The most important non-verbal features observed in this study was silence. These were captured using the observation schedules and in the notes taken by the researcher and the two research assistants. This led to conversation breakdowns and inconsistencies thereby necessitating repair as observed in subsections 4.2.1.6 and 4.2.1.7. Other non-verbal cues observed, such as looking aside, nodding, facial expressions, changing gaze direction and raising hands among others were outside the scope as in Appendix VI. When asked certain questions about the topic under discussion, some students decided to keep quiet giving no response at all. This behaviour affected the discourses such that in some cases a teacher-counsellor could initiate a repair and be forced to repair it. Studies by Egbochuku (2008) indicate that what clients and counsellors



hear is reinforced or contradicted by what they see demonstrated by the body language of the other. Further, Egbochuku (2008) opines that what the body does is an indicator of deeper sometimes unconscious feelings. While counsellors need to be aware of their body language, it is their work to decode, understand and interpret the client's body language. This is because body language and facial expressions reveal hidden feelings.

#### **4.5 Summary**

From the observations in the current study, it can be deduced that group guidance and counselling determined the outcome of the conversation discourse. In group guidance and counselling, one would expect participants to easily open up and talk freely but as observed in the current investigation there were many breakdowns and misunderstandings. There were trouble sources observed that caused breakdowns during group guidance and counselling. Those mostly observed were; mishearing percent, inappropriate word percent, and insufficient information percent. While misperception percent, interruption percent and deviation percent were minimally observed breakdowns. Intonation units which were either a single word or whole sentence with low or high tone were observed to cause breakdowns. Low tone signalled finality while high tone signalled more to come. However, low tone sometimes signalled uncertainty on the part of students. In the current study, the breakdowns observed could be as a result of a participant being singled out of the group to talk which became challenging to the speakers to talk on behalf of the group apparently because of fear, self-confidence and embarrassment ultimately necessitating repair.

Repair strategies employed by teacher-counsellors as observed were; request for repetition, neutral query, request for specification, request for clarification and other repetition. For instance in other-initiated repair, speakers were conditioned to repair their own utterance because there were some repair initiations by the other interlocutor, through neutral query, other repetition, request for clarification and request for specification in the previous turn.

Further, the repair strategies employed by interlocutors during group guidance and counselling discourse took the form of questions. It was also observed that interlocutors preferred open-ended type of questions to closed-ended questions. This is because open-ended questions kept the storyline on while closed-ended questions ended the story

It was observed that not all repairs were successful and that some repairs were abandoned as soon as it was perceived that the conversation was on track. Repair strategies employed enhance clarity in conversation by eliminating inconsistencies and misunderstanding. Some repair strategies used created more breakdowns rather than resolving them due to lack of identification of the exact trouble source. In some cases the teacher-counsellors were forced to initiate a repair as well as repair it because students could not respond to the requests put forward. Where counsellees were at ease with the teacher there were minimal or no breakdowns observed as in excerpts 14 and 15. In the current study, it was found that the teacher-counsellor selected the next speaker by either naming them or asking a question or through pointing at the next speaker. Findings in excerpts 5, 8, 14 and 15 show the use of paralinguistic features during group guidance and counselling sessions that were observed. Some of the paralinguistic features observed as indicated in excerpts 5, 8, 14 and 15 were raising of hands, silences, giggling, pointing at the next speaker and nodding.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of findings and conclusions of the study based on the discussions of the previous chapter. It comprises four sections namely; summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research. These are discussed in relation to the research objectives with the aim of answering the research questions. Therefore, this chapter presents an overview of the overall study as well as conclusions based on the study findings.

#### **5.2 Summary of Findings**

The main aim of the study was to investigate effects of conversation repair strategies employed by both counsellor and clients during high school students' group guidance and counselling sessions. Specifically, it sought to examine the discourse units that signal conversation repair strategies during group counselling sessions, describe the conversation repair strategies employed by counsellors and clients during guidance and counselling sessions and examine the effect of these conversation repair strategies on the counselling discourse by the counsellors and clients during group guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County, Kakamega County, Kenya. The findings on these are summarized in sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2 and 5.2.3.

##### **5.2.1 Discourse units that signal conversation breakdown during group guidance and counselling sessions**

The first objective of this study was to examine the discourse units that signal conversation breakdowns during group guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools in the study area. According to the findings, trouble sources were evident in the conversations analysed. The study findings identified mishearing in excerpt 1, inappropriate words in

excerpt 2, insufficient information in excerpt 3, vagueness in excerpt 4, misunderstanding in excerpt 5, statement of incorrect information in excerpt 6, incomprehension in excerpt 7, misperception in excerpt 8, interruption in excerpt 9 and change of topic in excerpt 10 as the discourse units responsible for the breakdowns in the group guidance and counselling conversations. They were caused by certain elements of discourse embedded in them, which were the focus of this objective. These were referred to as discourse units.

The findings revealed that discourse units present in the utterances signalled conversation breakdown in school group guidance and counselling sessions. They characterized every instance of breakdown sometimes as a single unit or in combination with others. Syntactic and prosodic units were identified as the discourse units that signal conversation breakdown. The presence of adjuncts in the statements appeared to create trouble sources as well as interrogatives when considering syntactic units, while rising or falling in intonation featured as the sole prosodic source of trouble in the conversations. Intonation units were notable for their location at turn-beginnings which are considered to be important places in conversation. This is where projection of the Turn Construction Unit (TCUs) is displayed by current speakers to which the next speakers orient when taking over their turns (Selting, 2000).

The use of adjuncts as in excerpt eleven became a source of confusion to the hearer especially at the turn-beginnings. Some functioned to prematurely deviate from the line of discussion causing the hearer(s) to have difficulty in reconnecting with the earlier context and understand what the speaker was referring to since there occurred an abrupt shift in focus. Misplaced interrogatives as in excerpt twelve observed in the guidance and counselling conversations were also trouble sources. In some instances, the participants, especially the counsellors who also happened to be teachers in the schools, tried to assert institutional doctrines by way of rhetorical questions as in excerpt twelve. These functioned as redundant interrogatives and did not elicit the obvious responses from the hearers. In addition, attempts

to assert the school policy only ended up creating more trouble sources in the conversations. The results from the face-to-face interview concurred with the recorded and observed guidance and counselling sessions by confirming that some of the interactants had fixed ideas on what they wanted to be done and were inflexible about them.

The findings also revealed that breakdowns were experienced due to the students' inability to appropriately use the English language during counselling sessions. This made some of them use inappropriate words during their conversations, as in excerpt two, which necessitated repair. Falling intonations (Paltridge, 2000), as in excerpts 1, 19, 21 and 24 contributed to instances of conversation breakdown necessitating calls for repair. However, these incidences of intonation could be attributed to several factors, such as a deliberate act of expressing uncertainty. However, the raised tone and the stressed words did not cause conversational breakdowns but repair as discussed in 5.2.2.

### **5.2.2 Conversation repair strategies employed by teacher-counsellors and clients during group guidance and counselling sessions**

The second objective of the study was to describe conversation repair strategies employed by counsellors and clients during guidance and counselling sessions in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County. The research findings on this objective revealed that request for repetition, neutral query, request for paraphrasing, conversational devices, request for confirmation, request for specification, specific constituent repetition and other repetition were the conversational repair strategies observed in the students' group guidance and counselling discourse.

Requests for repetition as a conversational repair strategy were used directly and indirectly depending on the discretion of the speaker. The direct request was preferred and it elicited more information, negating the need for clarification. A notable example of an indirect

request for repetition was observed when an imperative utterance “Speak up!” was used to address inaudibility in the discourse as in excerpts 1 and 24.

The research also identified the occurrence of the neutral query as a conversational repair strategy. In these types of conversational repair strategy, the trouble source was only conceived after the repair initiation act. This repair initiation was indicated by the neutral query such as, “Mhh?” (Garvey, 1977; Kenworthy 1984; 1986) as in excerpts 11, 16 and 18 which the hearer(s) chose to indicate that either they had not heard clearly or had not understood what the previous speaker had said. The characteristic of the neutral repair strategy that emerged in the data was the ambiguity of the neutral repair as opposed to the straight forward nature of the request for repetition. The choice of this neutral query in the repair initiation act could have been informed by the power relations evident between the students and the teacher counsellor. In this case, it was a polite way through which the students could express their need for clarification. Moreover, the use of such a repair strategy may be confined, in terms of group guidance and counselling episodes, to the participant(s) who had limited access to alternative words that would prompt the speaker to repair the affected segments of speech without appearing impolite.

Existence of requests for specification (Kenworthy 1984, 1986) as conversational repair strategies was also established in the study as in excerpt 19. These requests occurred when the speaker requested the hearer to repeat information with the aim of providing a specific response to an earlier assertion to confirm it. The requests for specification could not obtain due to failure to adequately identify the actual trouble source and could lead to creation of other trouble sources and repairs.

Repetition of the trouble-source as seen in excerpts 16, 21 and 27 by the addressee was identified as instrumental in helping to locate the problem and is often used to invite

correction or clarification, or express disagreement and disbelief as observed by Yun (2005). “Other repetition” strategy occurs when the speaker repeats what the hearer has spoken in the previous turn perhaps with an intention of confirming that assertion (Kenworthy, 1984). In the current research, this phenomenon of conversation was observed to be instrumental in addressing a misperception in the trouble source as well as inadequacy in language performance. The study also found that trouble sources, repair initiations and repairs can occur in multiplicity within a transaction. In such instances, there occurred more than one trouble source in a segment of conversation that naturally necessitated more repairs hence the multiple repair initiation efforts by the interlocutors.

### **5.2.3 The effects of conversation repair strategies on the discourse by teacher-counsellors and clients during group guidance and counselling sessions**

The third objective of the study was to examine the effect of conversation repair strategies on the counselling discourse by the counsellors and clients during group guidance and counselling sessions. The findings on this objective suggested that conversation repair strategies functioned to influence the direction of the discourse in three distinct ways. First, the identification of the preferred repair mechanisms (Schegloff *et al.*, 1977) such as other-initiated and other-repaired and other-initiated and self-repaired in group guidance and counselling discourse observed in this study provided direction to the conversation. The identification of trouble source was done by the “other” participant and repaired by the speaker. In such cases, the “other” participant realized that the discourse was at risk of being misunderstood and initiated the repair process as in excerpts 3 and 11. Incidences of other-initiation and other-repaired were also experienced during group guidance and counselling discourse as in excerpt 5.

Second, in some instances, teacher-counsellors clearly tried to direct the discourse towards what they wanted rather than the thought process of the counselees by use of rhetorical

questions. This was construed to mean that the counsellors had been trying to assert their dominant role (that of teacher) over the students. It is perhaps for this reason that some of the counselling sessions were less interactive and dominated by TCs. Third, the conversation repair strategies provided an opportunity for counselees to clarify their positions as in excerpt 13.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Conclusions on the current study were made in line with the findings of the study and in relation to the research objectives. The specific objectives were to; identify the discourse units that signal conversation breakdown during group guidance and counselling sessions, describe conversation repair strategies employed by counsellors and clients during guidance and counselling sessions and examine the effect of conversation repair strategies on the guidance and counselling discourse by the counsellors and clients during group counselling sessions in secondary schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County. First, with regard to discourse units that signal conversation breakdown, it emerged that conversation repair strategies in school group guidance and counselling sessions are signalled by syntactic and prosodic units in the discourse. However, these discourse units are very limited since in the group guidance and counselling sessions, the participants had varying levels of linguistic performance and what might not have constituted a breakdown in one setting ended up occasioning a breakdown in another.

Second, in describing various repair strategies used by both the counsellor and counselees during school group guidance and counselling discourse, the repair preference is other-initiated and self-repaired with some simple breakdowns being remedied in subsequent turns. More complex repairs like those involving misconceptions could take longer to realize due to the difficulty experienced by the interactants in locating the initial trouble source.



Finally, in examining how preferred repair strategies affect the discourse during the guidance and counselling sessions, it is evident that conversation repair strategies restored order to the talk, thereby, preserving its internal structure during group guidance and counselling sessions. In a conversation, participants are concerned about any occurrence of dysfluency. However, in the current study, participants tolerated some utterances which though incorrect, were deemed harmless to the flow of the conversation as in excerpt 2. At this point, it is also noted that not all trouble sources are identified by the interactants and not all repair strategies are successful. It was observed that, conversation repair strategies do not always repair conversation and could, in some instances, provide the counsellor(s) with opportunities to shift the topic of the discussion or even change the direction of the discourse completely. Therefore, it can be concluded that group guidance and counselling is important with regard to recognizing and repairing broken segments in conversation.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Repair as an effective interactional device is used by the interactants to put the conversation back 'on the right track'. Following the conclusions made in section 5.3, the following recommendations can be made:

With regard to objective one, the study recommends that counsellors involved in group guidance and counselling need to monitor the flow of conversations during the sessions to keep them within context. There is also need to choose or allow the use of a language that majority of the group members understand and can easily communicate in. This will minimize instances of trouble sources that necessitate need for repairs. Since most of the teacher-counsellors are responsible for moderating the discourse, they should learn to use appropriate words at turns in order to clearly articulate what they have in mind. This is because, in most cases, students might not ask that the teacher- counsellors repair defective segments of their talk.

The recommendation on objective two is that counsellors need to obtain transcripts of their guidance and counselling sessions in order to help them appraise the sessions in terms of the tractability of talk, its organization and the common incidences of breakdown. Given that speech is the principal medium of communication in school counselling, there is need to include linguistic studies in the training of teacher-counsellors to better equip them with techniques of identifying breakdowns in conversation and methods of repairing them that would make them communicate effectively during school group guidance and counselling sessions. Counsellors need to be made more aware of the role of language in promoting better communication of ideas and the need to preserve its integrity. They should also learn to be keen listeners as this will enable them manage the emergence of conversation breakdown with minimal effort. As noted in Okobia (1991), sensitive and active listening would also bring about personality changes in attitudes and the way interlocutors behave towards others and themselves.

To address objective three, this study recommends that participants monitor and respond to each other's talk for a successful conversation during counselling sessions. To achieve successful discourse, participants should avoid tolerating incorrect utterances and instead identify trouble sources and resolve them by employing appropriate repair strategies. This would enable the students improve self-confidence as well as increase their levels of participation. Ultimately, this would result to minimal breakdowns and misunderstanding thereby making the sessions mutually beneficial.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

Following the discussion of issues arising from this study, it is suggested that further research may be undertaken on the following areas:

First, there is need to carry out a study to examine the effects of conversation repair strategies in informal settings where time limitations do not affect the topic being discussed and also participants are free to join in the conversation at their discretion.

Second, it could be of scholarly benefit to conduct research on the effects of types of interrogatives as repair strategies in conversation.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: CONVERSATION A

School : 1

No of Students : 9

Teacher-Counsellor : One female

Topic : Personal Shield

Time : 4 pm

TC : So we are through. If we are through we shall go through each of us what you have written down so I will start with you (st.1). Tell us what you have written as your greatest achievement.

ST1 : I have not finished

TC : what? (.)I didn't get you

ST 1 : I have not written

TC : Ok, I will start from this side. What have you written as your great achievement in life? ((pointing at next speaker))

ST2 : Being in school from standard one till now

TC : Being in school from standard one up to now in form three. Aha... that is an achievement because many have dropped out of school. What is your ambition?

ST2 : To be a doctor

TC : To be a doctor. Now that you want to be a doctor, what do you do to ensure that you become the doctor you want to be?

ST2 : Putting more effort in academics.

TC : What subjects do you like?

ST2 : Sciences

TC : mhh... for you to be a doctor you must be very good in sciences. What is your greatest fear?

ST2 : I fear God.

TC : Fear God? I think you respect God.

ST2 : Ok I fear an accident.

TC : what would you fear?

ST2 : Getting injured, lame...

TC : and supposing you get an accident what would you do?

ST2 : mhh?

TC : Aha... I was asking supposing you are involved in an accident how would you take it?

ST2 : I will learn to live with it and accept.

TC : What precautions do you take to ensure that you don't get an accident?

ST2 : Maybe if it is a bus I take a bus that has a required amount of people.

TC : What else?

ST2 : I get into a bus when a driver does not over speed.

TC : What would you do if the driver over speeds? Let us help him, what else can he do?

((addressing other members))

ST3 : Be careful when crossing the road.

ST4 : Make sure you pray all the time.

TC : mhh... make sure you start your day with a prayer.

ST5 : When boarding a bus you should always tighten belts, the safety belts prevent

jacking forward and backward.

TC : Mhh...very good very good. Whenever you get into a bus ensure you wear safety

belts.

ST6 : ensure the driver is not drunkard (.) drank

TC : mhh...check and see that the driver is sober. Now whom do you love most?

ST2 : My father

TC : You love your father most? Why not your mother?

ST2 : It is unfortunate that she is dead.

TC : Ok, your mum passed away (.) sorry! You have now been left with one parent eh... I

now know that your mum passed away. It is good to have someone you love

TC : since you were born what is your greatest achievement?

ST 3 : Sincere and honest.

TC : your achievement aha... that is a good virtue. What makes you think that you are sincere and honest?

ST3 : Since I came to this school I have been honest.

TC : since she joined this school she has tried to be honest and sincere and she has not been an indiscipline case I hope your classmates can confirm. Is it true those who know her? What would you say as evidence that she is sincere and honest?

ST4 : From my observation I have not seen her getting punished, so I can say that she is sincere.

TC : It is good to be sincere and honest with that everybody will respect you and give you a job. Keep up with that virtue. What is your ambition?

St3 : To be a doctor.

TC : What do you do to ensure that you become a doctor?

ST3 : Work hard

TC : Are you good in sciences?

Work hard if not see your teachers for assistance.

What is your fear in life?

ST3 : war in the country.

TC : Why would you fear war in the country?

ST3 : Because when there is war you can't concentrate in education

TC : so you are saying that with war you cannot concentrate in studies?

ST3 : Yes.

Suppose war broke in Kakamega what would you do? How would you go about it?

ST3 :(( silence....))

TC : What are you doing to ensure there are no wars?

ST3 : ((silence....))

TC : One thing is that you should preach peace in your area and everywhere

Whom do you love most?

ST3 : My mother

TC : why?

ST3 : The pain she has gone through since she conceived me up to now she has always  
protected me

TC : So you appreciate your mother because she carried you in her womb up to now. It is  
good. Be open to her share your problems with her.

(Sakina) what is your achievement?

ST4 : Reaching form two.

TC : What is your ambition?

ST4 : To be an agricultural researcher.



TC : What are you doing to achieve that?

ST4 : Working hard in sciences and agriculture.

TC : What were your last scores in sciences?

STk : Agric 23, Biology 15, Chemistry 13, out of 30.

TC : So you see, you have a long way to go to achieve that ambition. Start working hard now. Don't wait till form 4

What is your greatest fear?

ST4 : Aids

TC : Aids, you fear suffering from HIV/Aids?

What are you doing to ensure that you don't get this deadly disease?

ST4 : Abstain

TC : mhh... abstain, that is very good.

But suppose you get through (.)through (.)through what?

ST : Blood transfusion, infection... (in unison)

TC : mhh... what would you do?

ST4 : I would use drugs and avoid spreading the disease.

TC : mhh... you would use drugs

It is also good to be very careful with blood transfusion. Check that the blood has been examined, it is HIV negative.

Whom do you love most?

ST4 : My father.

TC : why not your mother?

ST4 : because he provides me with everything I want.

TC : Suppose your mother provided you with everything would you love her more than your father?

ST4 : Yes I would love both

TC : What is your greatest achievement?

ST5 : Recently I managed to memorize the whole Koran book.

TC : You have memorized the whole Koran? You can recite any verse you are asked at any time?

ST5 : Yes

TC : That is good of you make sure you encourage others to do so.

What is your ambition?

ST5 : I want to be an industrial chemistry?

TC : CHEMISTRY?

ST5 : Chemistist.

TC : It is good that you have identified what you want to be.

What are you doing to achieve that?

ST5 : Working hard in sciences especially chemistry and math.

TC : I want to see you consulting teachers, form discussion groups as well

What is your greatest fear?

ST5 : My greatest fear is any kind of sickness.

TC : You fear malaria

ST5 : Flu

TC : How do you protect yourself from sickness?

ST5 : Like flu I use handkerchiefs

TC : What about malaria?

ST5 : sleeping in treated mosquito nets

TC : HIV/Aids?

ST5 : I am preventing myself from premarital sex and any sharp object someone has used.

TC : mhh... very good.

Is there anything he has left out?

ST : Syphilis ((in unison))

ST5 : That one I've said if I abstain from premarital sex I can prevent myself from getting syphilis.

TC : The person you love most?

ST5 : I love my mother.

TC : Why not your dad?

ST5 : I love him but not so much as my mother.

TC : What makes you love your mum?

ST5 : My mum gives me good advice about life and how to overcome challenges.

TC : That is good but it is also good to have love for your father.

TC Now we go to ((Dismiss)) ((pointing at the next speaker))

ST6 : ((Silent))

TC ; I want something that you can say that up to now you've been able to do.

ST6 : A good planner.

TC : ((Purity)) you share a class, is he a good planner?

ST7 : He has a personal timetable that I always borrow and use.

TC : aha... he has a timetable one that you can borrow and make changes to make yours  
from that one of his.

ST 7 : Yes.

TC What is your ambition?

ST6 : To become a lawyer.

TC : what are you doing to become one?

ST6 : I am working hard in subjects like C.R.E, history and English.

TC : aha ... that is good but I want to tell you that at the end of the day, to become a

lawyer you need to work hard all around so that you're aggregate is high.

What is your greatest fear?

ST6 : my greatest fear is to be in disciplined

TC : How would you fear to be in disciplined?

ST6 : Because being indiscipline may lead me into problems

TC : How do you avoid it?

ST6 : I make sure that I do what is being given to me to avoid mistakes

TC : so you try to avoid indiscipline cases. Indeed up to now I have not seen you in any  
indiscipline group.

The person you love most

ST6 : The person I love most is my guardian.

TC : single out one for me or you only have one guardian.

ST6 : I only have one guardian.

TC : Aha (.) where are your parents?

ST6 : They passed away.

TC : How are you related to your guardian or how do you call him?

ST6 : I call him dad

TC : Aha... that is very good show him love, work hard now that he is not your parent,  
work hard so that you appreciate him.

But remember there is always God for you

Your achievement?

ST7 : Having made it to high school.

TC : Aha... what is your ambition?

ST7 : To become a medical researcher.

TC : I want you to work hard in sciences like the rest.

Greatest fear

ST7 : I fear disappointing my guardians.

TC : Disappointing them in which manner?

ST7 : Like getting pregnant.

TC : What are you doing to avoid pregnancy?

ST7 : Abstain from sex

TC : That is very good. But suppose you get pregnant, am not saying that you get pregnant, would you tell them?

ST7 : Yes, I will tell them because I know if I go to abort it will have an effect in my life.

TC : anyway, it is good to protect yourself.

The person you love most?

ST7 : My brother.

TC : your (.)Your brother Emmanuel?

ST7 : Yes

TC : What makes you love him more than any other person?

ST7 : He is the only one I have, I can socialize with.

TC : Are you only two in your family?

ST7 : Yes

TC : That is good, try to guide Emmanuel so that he can learn the way you are learning.

Do you have a guardian?

ST7 : Yes, my grandmother.

TC : Be close to her also for guidance.

((Nancy)) What is your greatest achievement?

ST8 : Passing exams.

TC : No, something that you have achieved, you are yet to do your exams, what can you count and say you have achieved up to now?

ST8 : Passing my exams.

TC : Oho... improving, ok, ok Aha: what is your ambition?

ST8 : To be a land surveyor

TC : what are you doing to ensure you become one?

ST8 : I am working hard especially in agriculture.

TC : Just as I have told others work hard too.

What is your greatest fear?

ST8 : I fear rumour mongers

TC : you fear rumour mongers, how?

ST8 : This is because when you gossip to someone, the person will spread the message and that can make someone not help you in any need.

TC : So you fear rumour mongers because they may easily get you into conflict with other people.

ST8 Yes

TC What do you do or need to do to ensure there is no more rumour mongering.

ST8 : First when someone starts talking about others I just tell him or her that that is not good and leave.

TC : aha: mhh... good. What else can she do?

ST4 : I think she can advise people around her to stop that habit because it is not good.

Whom do you love most?

ST8 : I love my dad.

TC : why?

ST8 : This is because he is the only one providing everything for me, struggling for my life.

TC : aha (.) (Doreen) what is your achievement?



ST1 : having made to high school.

TC : Your ambition

ST9 : To be an engineer

TC : What are you doing about it?

ST9 : Working hard in math and sciences.

TC : Okay, work hard and consult your teachers. What is your greatest fear?

ST9 : Commit murder

TC : To...

ST9 : Commit murder

TC : murdering somebody or yourself?

ST9 : Just any.

TC : why?

ST9 : My mum tells me always that if you murder somebody his or her spirit will always  
haunt you.

TC : What do you do to make sure that you are not involved in any murder?

ST9 : When I am annoyed and I feel like I am so stressed, I walk away from the person.

TC : It is good as we have said always make up with somebody, share don't keep  
problems to yourself. Whom do you love?

ST9 : My mum.

TC : Why your mum?

ST9 : She has always been on my side even when I am wrong; she always talks to me in a lovely manner till I feel at least I have somebody who is there for me.

TC : It is good that you love your mother share with her anything that disturbs you.

(Edina) what is your greatest achievement?

ST1 : Being in school again after dropping out.

TC : That is good being in school after dropping. Your ambition?

ST1 : To become an accountant.

TC : What are you doing to become one?

ST1: I am doing physics and math

TC : So you have to do a lot of practice on the same. It is not hard, at least I have seen you doing well in math and if you continue you will make it.

Your greatest fear

ST1 : I fear Hunger

TC : getting annoyed yourself or annoying others?

ST1 : I fear to be hungry

TC : To be angry yourself?

ST : Kuskianjaa, HUNGER. (in unison)

TC : ooh... hunger, ooh... hunger.

ST1 : I fear because if I feel hungry everything else will not go on well.

TC : What are you doing to ensure that you don't feel hungry all the time?

ST1 : I make sure that I will work hard now so that in the future I have anything I need.

TC : Do you fear hunger in future or now?

ST1 : I fear hunger in future because even if I fear now I would not have anything that I need.

TC : Aha... so you fear hunger in future I thought you fear hunger any time of the day, because there are people with complications like ulcers I would advise you to carry some food with you so that you can eat anytime you feel hungry.

The person you love

ST1 : My dad

TC : Aha (.) you also need to be close to your mother being a girl child you need to be close to your mother and share some things in life.

## APPENDIX II: CONVERSATION B

School : 2

No of students : 4

Teacher-Counsellor : One male

Topic : An income generating project

Time : 1 pm

TC :What do you want or how can I help you?

ST1 :We want to start a show to interrogate people

TC :Speak up!

ST2 :we are intending to start a show to interrogate people like one for Oprah

TC :Oho... You are saying about a show, I heard about a shop ((laughing)) yeah I get it.

ST2 : we want to have arrangement on how we will be conducting it mainly on Sundays

: since that is when many people are free

TC :So how exactly do you want to run it?

: The Oprah style or?

ST :Yes (in unison)

TC :How many are you? Because, it is difficult to work on your own.

ST 3 :We are several guys. Some in class

TC :What will you be doing?

ST3 :we want to be interviewing people about the emerging issues like drug abuse and  
:such.

TC: :With such a thing you need something called a proposal showing what you intend  
:to do and cover.

:Also you need to have the questions ready and pilot yourself. Do you know what is  
: piloting?

ST1 :Making something to progress or running.

TC :This is to find out how it will work. Like finding people cause it is not easy to do  
: so. Ok?

STs :Yes. (in unison)

TC :Try doing it at class level and see what fruit it will bring .With this you will be  
:able to progress further.

### APPENDIX III: CONVERSATION C

School : 3  
No of students : 8  
Teacher-Counsellor : One male  
Topic : Social problems  
Time : 1 pm

TC: I wish we talk about some of the social problems which affect our learning or life here in (Kakamega) school. Sorry for using that name (pausing then laughing) which affect us negatively or positively let me have some of the social problems. The floor is open.

ST1 : For example in class, for example there are those appointed to sweep the classroom they are irresponsible.

TC : So you are talking about cleanliness of the classroom, if it is not well swept not well done in terms of cleaning it real works, on your academic.

TC : May you go further, how does it affect you?

ST1 : You see the environment, the air in class there is dusty, and you see it affects the health of students, the oxygen is somehow limited.

TC : The inhalation affects you...good

ST2 : The seniors discourage us from reading. They try to discourage us that we should not waste our time reading.

TC : So you are emphasizing on the talk from seniors. Some of the talk is really negative; it puts down your gear in learning.

ST2 : Yes.

TC : ha...who else social problems

ST3 : The seniors you find that they always make noise.

TC : Noise from seniors. Do we have also noise from juniors? Do juniors also make noise in class? Do we just limit the noise to seniors only?

ST3 : No

TC : It can also extend to the juniors. So noise is a contributing factor

ST3 : Theft some of the seniors steal mattresses. You can imagine the time you waste for the mattress.

TC : Only theft for mattress?

ST4 : Sometimes you find your box has been broken into.

TC : Theft in the boarding section. Do you also have theft in the tuition block?

ST : Yes (( in unison))

ST5 : There are positive factors, the interaction between teachers and students.

TC : That is the closeness of teachers and students. You think it Is a positive factor that is

really encourages learning.

ST5 : Yes

TC : Alright

ST3 : Still the positive factors, the library has all the reference books, course books and even magazines and students can have studies without the teacher.

TC : Do you use it?

ST3 : yes.

TC : Do you think it is helping?

ST3 : Yes

ST6 : The negative effect about the library.

TC : (Laughing) sometimes the librarian harasses you.

ST6 : yes

TC : Are you suggesting the librarian should tell the titles of books.

ST6 : yes

TC : Have you done research on the books and titles that are there?

ST6 : No, I only go and ask for the book I want.

TC : That is why I have asked you if you have taken your time to go to the library you yourself and maybe researched on the books that are there.

ST6 : Sometimes you go to the library ask for a revision book and the librarian asks you



why you are asking for a revision book and yet you have not finished the syllabus.

TC : So... discouragement from asking for a particular book

ST7 : Sometimes the conditions in the library are not good. It doesn't have fans to bring coolness, it discourages some people.

TC : Wonderful! ((Laughing))

TC : You have not talked about food. Does food affect your studies?

ST8 : What I can say about food is that it is ok but there is much time wasted on the queue in the dining.

T C : But the food itself is it good for consumption? Does it give you problems?

ST8 : No, it is just ok it is enough for you to keep you going.

TC : aha...

ST3 : Some foods like githeri encourages sleep in class and also to some people who read at night and don't have money. You can't extend up to 11pm.

TC : ((Laughing)) so we should introduce compulsory pocket money?

ST9 : yes

TC : ((hhh)) ok, we are going to do that.

Anybody else who has not talked?

ST8 : Some people discourage you from group discussions. Some separate themselves and talk about you.

TC : Aha...

ST3 : Just about the pocket money, some students are extravagant. Sometimes a parent has given you money and you misuse. The parent is not able to give you money again. You may find someone is going from one person to another borrowing and he has no money to return and there is chaos between them.

TC : Mhh... There is always trouble down there. Maybe lastly how do you respond, how do you cope?

ST8 : When you are. [

TC : [When I was discouraged] because I want you to tell me how you...

((pointing at the student))

ST8 : When I was discouraged yourself esteem lowers but if you have a friend you can

((silence)) some ((silence))

TC : Some...

ST8 : You can also help yourself by giving yourself some morale, so that it doesn't go below the level that is required.

TC : I want you to tell me how you have been coping you, you, how you have been coping? ((pointing at student))

ST3 : Personally, I have one friend who confides in me and I also confide in him.

TC : He is able to encourage you?

ST3 : yes

TC : and you've been finding it helpful?

ST3 : yes

TC : Can you tell us something that he has done to encourage you? Or what he did that encouraged you?

ST3 : I usually did not perform well and he came up with the idea of group discussion and that is how I improved.

TC : Aha...

ST5 : Like when others say” mnadiscuss nini na hakuna kitu mnaelewa “. (what are you discussing and there is nothing you understand)So I just sometimes go to the theatre room to do my personal studies.

TC : Aha::

ST6 : We need to sacrifice for our studies. So I just decide to forego a meal so that I can catch up with studies.

TC : So foregoing some meals so that you can study? You have been doing that?

ST6 : yes

TC : Na hujakonda (and you have not cut weight)

ST4 : Like the problem of theft, I borrowed a shirt from my friend in total I have two shirts, I wash one at night and put on the line and remove it early in the morning.

TC : (Chege) has been trying to borrow shirts from friends. Don't you think that is dangerous?

ST4 : You know I can't do with one shirt sasainabiditu (am now forced to)

TC : Inakubiditu bora (it forces you)((laughing)). One thing I want to tell you is that the trend you have taken is good. Anything you are doing pursuing in that is good don't give up. Going to the library should not discourage you in fact should encourage you to go more and more. Theft is common especially in boarding schools even big schools. For that thing to happen it should not derail you from working hard. If you have identified a person who does that what are you supposed to do?

ST4 : You report to the boarding master or to the administration.

TC : Yes you can report to the teacher concerned. Such a person can be counselled not necessarily being punished but he can be advised, counselled and be told this thing you are doing it is wrong. And you emphasize. So don't hide when you see your friends having bad habits. Noise in class you can tell the prefect to do something. Can he do something?

ST : Yes ((in unison))

TC : Yaah::: He can do something about it. The dust you can talk to the prefect so that the class can be mopped cleaned properly and it gives good conditions for studies. About pocket money, don't love possessing much money why? Why? Answer that question

why?

ST3 : For example the canteen you find yourself liking a lot of food.

TC : Lacking ?

ST3 : Liking a lot of food.

TC : Ahaa... you also become foodiologist ((laughing)) aha... Having a lot of money will waste your time because all the time you will be giving to the canteen. It will affect your academics. also in the future you may not find that money to posses .Thank you so much may God bless you, have a good evening, blessed studies

#### APPENDIX IV: CONVERSATION D

- School : 4
- No of students : 4
- Teacher-Counsellor : One female
- Topic : Leadership
- Time : 4 pm
- TC :hey! You people know how to keep time!
- ST :Yes, madam.(( in unison))
- ST1 :you know today we have dorm meeting, so we wanted to see you first.
- TC :Oh... Today is Tuesday?
- ST :Yes.( ( in unison))
- TC :Then you make yourselves comfortable. We shall try to be brief. Now you  
move your chair here( (pointing at the place)). (( students drag chairs)) Ok.  
  
So, which of you made it to captain
- ST ((1&2 raise hands))
- TC :and the others?
- ST3 :Compound.
- ST4 :class
- TC :class what?

ST4 :Class prefect, 3North.

TC :Ohoo..

TC :Do you think you deserved to be a leader?

ST1 :Yes, because I had the zeal to lead people.

ST2 :I was a leader before and I believed in myself.

ST3 :I too was a leader in primary school.

TC :How did you feel when you were chosen as a leader in high school?

ST1 :I had mixed feelings since I had been told that leaders are hated but I went ahead to become one.

ST2 :I was happy since I wanted to change the nature of our class.

ST4 :I had the courage to lead people.

TC :What were your plans to improve the status of your classes?

ST5 :In East, I had planned to improve on the academic issue of the class. Also I wanted to reduce the level of noise making to make a conducive environment for studying.

ST4 :Like for me in North, I wanted to improve the levels of cleanliness and academics too. Also I advise them.

ST6 :As south we sat down and decided to change on our behaviour so as to get good result. This was because some of our teachers had abandoned our class.

TC :It's obvious that you met various challenges which were they?

ST4 :For me, I was disrespected and viewed like I was not fit for the task. So at times I could call the teacher to intervene.

ST5 : In my case I had an assistant who was noisy, so it was hard to coordinate the class.

ST1 :Vandalization of my property.

TC :Really!

ST1 :Yeah! ((giggle)) I found my stuff had been messed

TC :Did you find who did it?

ST1 :No. But...[

TC :[Did you report to the teacher or deputy?]

ST1 :You know, madam, we tried to investigate ourselves so that we don't report to the deputy everything.

ST1 :Sometimes we just deal with cases ourselves

TC :How have you improved the nature of your class?

ST4 : I became strict and with time the class has improved greatly. Even I remember the deputy congratulating us for the good work.

ST4 :By being strict they respected me because I could report them to the deputy, teachers and senior captains.



ST5 : I called the class teacher and he spoke to them and they began to respect me.

TC :By the end of the year, captains and prefect are chosen.

: Do you have any idea why you were demoted while your other colleagues remained?

ST3 : I was not co-existing with other prefects. So I think they contributed to my demotion since they said I was not effective.

ST4 :Our class teacher assured me that I was the prefect. When the list was forwarded by the captains my name was missing and I was demoted that way.

ST6 :I had engaged in a fight and suspended for 2 weeks .During this time my assistant stroke a deal with our class teacher and I was demoted that way.

TC : Do you believe you can be leaders later in life?

ST6 Mhh?

TC : I was asking if you believe you can be good leaders later on.

ST6 : Yes, because I believe I have the potential.

ST5 :Yeah, since I aspire to be one.

ST4 : Also I know I can become one

TC : By the look of things I see we have people who are aspiring to be leaders.

So as it's up to us to become what we want so the ball is in your court.

Now, the bell has gone. Tuonane(see you).

## APPENDIX V: CONVERSATION E

School : 5  
No of students : 9  
Teacher-Counsellor : One female  
Topic : Academics  
Time : 1 pm

TC :Today, we shall discuss issues regarding academics. You all come from 2

:Green isn't it?

ST :((all nod heads in agreement))

TCI :looked at your performance in the CATs and I saw we needed to talk,'

: sindiyo' isn't that so?

STs :Yes ((in unison))

TC :You see, now, academics is the most important, eeh? If you people come to

school and you don't get good marks, and you are in form two, eeh?

ST : ((nod in agreement))

TC :Anyway, let me not start with you. What academic goals have you set or do

: You have at school?

ST 1 :I have set to improve my grades from a B- to an A.

ST1 :Am trying to improve on my weak subjects so that I can achieve the best from them.

ST2 :Iwant to move my aggregate grade from a B- to a B +, by working on my weak subjects.

TC :By the look of things all of you scored a B- .

ST :Yeah, (in unison).

TC :We have both our weak subjects and strong subjects. Which are they?

ST3 :My weak subjects are Physics and History.

ST4 :My weak subjects are Biology and History.

ST5 :I am weak in sciences mainly.

TC :In your weak areas what have you done so as to improve on them?

ST3 :For me, I have set to look into details about the subject and to study it keenly too.

ST4 : I have undertaken various measures like giving more time to them. Also

When stranded I go ahead and ask my friends who are better off in the subject

As a matter of fact I do not pay attention to propogandas spread by people that the subjects is harder as you progress.

ST5 : I read on my own then later, afterwards I engage in group discussion so as to reinforce whatever I have learnt.

TC :Have you thought of sitting down and coming up with a timetable? This is to help you in balancing between the weak and strong subjects or areas.

By having a personal timetable you will be able to slot in your subjects and give more time to the weak ones’.

TC : Challenges are present and are part of human life. In setting or achieving your goals what hinders you?

ST7 :What?

TC :Well, what challenges do you face here in school that may be contributing to your poor performance?

ST7 :My main challenge is discouragement from students. For example in Physics since it is my weakest they tell me I can’t make it.

ST8 :Discouragements too from classmates.

ST3 :Prejudgment of people towards a certain subject even before they know what it entails.

TC : Do you believe in these analogies or rumours that are spread are true?

ST3 : I don’t, since many may have not been performing hence coming up with their conclusions. Also it might be that you are much better than them .So is it better to believe in oneself.

- TC : Each one of you has set targets. Which are they?
- ST1 :By the end of the day I want to have done Physics and History so as to cover up.
- ST2 :Before we sit for exams I want to have received several questions papers and complement what I learnt.
- ST3 :Discussing questions in groups.
- TC : In future what do you want to achieve in the long run?
- ST4 :I want to be a doctor. The best doctor to be so as to serve the people.
- ST5 :Want to be a civil engineer.
- ST6 :I want to be a businessman or what God has in store for me.
- TC: :You have great talents. It's up to you to see that they have come to being & fulfil.
- Life is not always a bed of roses and it is not a flat surface .It has the ups and down .So it's advisable to plan oneself.
- By having a timetable, it will help you to do your studies. Secondly engaging in group work will help too. Here you discuss Maths, Biology, and English it will be hard to forget since you see the topics you relate it to so and so.
- It's up to you to fulfil your goals .Don't be the hindrance, work out your best and God will bless you and what you ask will be granted unto you . Ok?
- ST :yes (( in unison))

## APPENDIX VI: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

This is an observation schedule prepared by the researcher to assist her in capturing data meant for her studies in linguistics. No attempt shall be to investigate anything outside the scope of this schedule and all information will remain confidential. The findings and information generated is intended to help improve communication during student counselling discourse and will be made available for all interested parties

Session No. .... Topic .....

No. of Students.....Duration .....

Non-verbal features observed	Frequency of Occurrence
Silence	
Nodding	
Facial expressions	
Giggling	
Raising of hands	
Clapping	
Pointing at next speakers	
Laughing	
Looking down or aside	
Turning heads	
Shuffling of feet	
Folding hands	

## APPENDIX VII: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHER COUNSELLORS

This is an interview guide prepared by a researcher at Maseno University to help her in capturing data about effects of repair strategies applied by Teacher counsellors during group counselling sessions in secondary schools in Kakamega Municipality. No attempt shall be made to investigate anything outside the scope of this schedule. All information will remain confidential. No name or identity of respondent will be referred to anywhere in the final research report. The information given by respondents will be used purely for academic purposes. The researcher appreciates your cooperation in advance.

Please respond to the following questions.

School No \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Current designation \_\_\_\_\_

Training as a teacher- counsellor    Trained \_\_\_\_\_ Untrained \_\_\_\_\_

1. What communication problems do you encounter when handling student clients during group counselling sessions and how do you overcome them?
2. Does language use present a significant problem in communication during these sessions?
3. What counselling techniques do you find practical and relevant during student group counselling sessions?
4. Do you think the language used should be informed by the topic under discussion in order to make it more effective?
5. How does the body language used by student counsellees affect discourse during group counselling sessions?
6. What are the challenges you face during group counselling sessions?
7. In your opinion, who is a good teacher- counsellor?
8. What factors do you consider key when interacting with student counsellees?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH



## APPENDIX VIII: GAIL JEFFERSON'S TRANSCRIPTION SYMBOLS

- [ ] : Square brackets mark the start and end of overlapping speech. They are aligned to mark the precise position of overlap as in the example below.
- ↑↓ : Vertical arrows precede marked pitch movement, over and above normal rhythms of speech. They are used for notable changes in pitch beyond those represented by stops, commas and question marks.
- : Side arrows are used to draw attention to features of talk that are relevant to the current analysis.
- Underlining : indicates emphasis; the extent of underlining within individual words locates emphasis and also indicates how heavy it is.
- CAPITALS : mark speech that is hearably louder than surrounding speech. This is beyond the increase in volume that comes as a by-product of emphasis.
- °-I know it;° : 'degree' signs enclose hearably quieter speech.
- That's r\*ight. : Asterisks precede a 'squeaky' vocal delivery.
- (0.4) : Numbers in round brackets measure pauses in seconds (in this case, 4 tenths of a second). If they are not part of a particular speaker's talk they should be on a new line. If in doubt use a new line.
- (.) : A micro pause, hearable but too short to measure.
- ((staccato)) : Additional comments from the transcriber, e.g. about features of context or delivery.
- shewa::nted : Colons show degrees of elongation of the prior sound; the more colons, the more elongation.
- hhh : Aspiration (out-breaths); proportionally as for colons.

hhh :Inspiration (in-breaths); proportionally as for colons.

Yeh, ‘ :Continuation’ marker, speaker has not finished; marked by fall-rise or weak rising intonation, as when delivering a list.

y’know? :Question marks signal stronger, ‘questioning’ intonation, irrespective of grammar.

Yeh. :Full stops mark falling, stopping intonation (‘final contour’), irrespective of grammar, and not necessarily followed by a pause.

bu-u- :hyphens mark a cut-off of the preceding sound.

>he said< :‘greater than’ and ‘lesser than’ signs enclose speeded-up talk. Occasionally they are used the other way round for slower talk.

solid.= =We had :‘Equals’ signs mark the immediate ‘latching’ of successive talk, whether of one or more speakers, with no interval.

hehheh :Voiced laughter. Can have other symbols added, such as underlinings, pitch movement, extra aspiration, etc.

sto (h) p i (h) t :Laughter within speech is signalled by h’s in round brackets.



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Email: [muerc-secretariate@maseno.ac.ke](mailto:muerc-secretariate@maseno.ac.ke)

**FROM:** SECRETARY - MUERC

**DATE:** 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2014

**TO:** Ms. Siro Teresa Moke.ira,  
School of Arts and Social Sciences,  
Linguistics Department,  
Maseno University,  
P.O. Box 333-40105, Maseno, Kenya.

**REF:** MSU/DRPC/MUERC/000057/14

**RE: EFFECT OF CONVERSATION REPAIR STRATEGIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' GROUP COUNSELLING IN KAKAMEGA MUNICIPALITY, KENYA. PROPOSAL REFERENCE NO: MSU/DRPC/MUERC/000057/14**

This is to inform you that the Maseno University Ethics Review Committee (MUERC) determined that the ethics issues raised at the initial review were adequately addressed in the revised proposal. Consequently, the study is granted approval for implementation effective this 27<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2014 for a period of one (1) year.

Please note that authorization to conduct this study will automatically expire on 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2015. If you plan to continue with the study beyond this date, please submit an application for continuation approval to MUERC Secretariat by 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2015.

Approval for continuation of the study will be subject to successful submission of an annual progress report that is to reach MUERC Secretariat by 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2015.

Please note that any unanticipated problems resulting from the conduct of this study must be reported to MUERC. You are required to submit any proposed changes to this study to MUERC for review and approval prior to initiation. Please advise MUERC when the study is completed or discontinued.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Bonuke Anyona,  
Secretary,

Maseno University Ethics Review Committee.



Cc: Chairman,  
Maseno University Ethics Review Committee.

MASENO UNIVERSITY IS ISO 9001:2008 CERTIFIED



# MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Telegrams: .....  
Telephone: 31413 and 31322  
When replying please quote  
E-mail: [kakcentdeo@yahoo.com](mailto:kakcentdeo@yahoo.com)  
E-mail: [moe\\_kakamegacentral@yahoo.com](mailto:moe_kakamegacentral@yahoo.com)



DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICE  
KAKAMEGA CENTRAL  
P. O. BOX 39  
KAKAMEGA

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

Ref: No: KAK/ED/ADM/27/(30)

May 28, 2013

All Principals  
KAKAMEGA CENTRAL

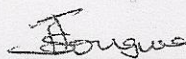
Siro Teresa Mokeira  
Maseno University Box Private Bag  
MASENO

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION.

Reference is made your letter PG/MA/024/2011 on the above subject.

This is to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in our secondary schools in Kakamega Central District to enable you complete your course.

Best wishes.

  
T. J. SONGWA  
FOR: DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER  
KAKAMEGA CENTRAL

DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER  
KAKAMEGA CENTRAL