TEACHING PRAGMATICS IN AN EFL CONTEXT: IMPLICATIONS FOR COURSEBOOK DESIGN, TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract

English is estimated to be spoken by close to two billion people worldwide and most commonly between people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, that is, as a lingua franca. Contrary to monolithic notions of English, English as a lingua franca is fluid, situated, negotiated, and hybrid, and as such requires knowledge of pragmatics, the use of language in its varied social contexts. What then is the role of pragmatics in English language teaching (ELT) classrooms in contexts where English is a foreign language (EFL) and English is often used as a lingua franca? This study examined the use of global ELT coursebooks to teach English language use in EFL contexts. It was operationalised in a case study of a McGraw-Hill publication in a Thai English Language Centre. Adopting Verschueren’s theory of pragmatics and a critical discourse analytic approach, data from the coursebook, classroom observations, and interviews with teachers and students were analysed to identify representations of English language use. The coursebook and teachers emphasised sets of decontextualised linguistic structures to teach speaking and conversation. However, the students reported using English in diverse contexts, and interpreted and applied the structures in different ways with varied awareness of the effects of their linguistic choices. Teachers were constrained by the coursebook, their understandings of culture and knowledge of how to teach pragmatics highlighting implications for teacher education and coursebook design. The findings contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the role of pragmatics in the EFL classroom, specifically the representations and realisations of pragmatics in global ELT coursebook materials, classroom activities and among teachers and students in EFL contexts. It is intended that the new informed understandings will enhance the teaching of pragmatics in the politically, socially, culturally, and economically charged context of global English language teaching.
# Table of Contents

Keywords ................................................................................................................................. i
Abstract ........................................................................................................................................ ii
Table of Contents ......................................................................................................................... iii
List of Figures ............................................................................................................................... vi
List of Tables ................................................................................................................................. vii
List of Abbreviations .................................................................................................................... viii
Statement of Original Authorship .............................................................................................. ix
Acknowledgements ...................................................................................................................... x

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 1

1.1 Key Concepts ....................................................................................................................... 2
1.2 Background .......................................................................................................................... 5
  1.2.1 English language use in the context of globalisation ....................................................... 5
  1.2.2 English as a lingua franca ............................................................................................... 6
  1.2.3 The use of English as a lingua franca in Asia and Thailand ........................................... 9
1.3 Context ................................................................................................................................. 10
  1.3.1 English in Thailand ........................................................................................................ 10
  1.3.2 English language education in Thailand ........................................................................ 11
  1.3.3 The place of spoken interaction in Thai English language education ........................... 13
1.4 Why Pragmatics? ............................................................................................................... 15
1.5 Research Aims .................................................................................................................... 16
1.6 Personal Background .......................................................................................................... 17
1.7 Research Design .................................................................................................................. 18
1.8 Significance of the research project .................................................................................... 19
1.9 Structure of the Thesis ........................................................................................................ 20

## CHAPTER 2: RESEARCHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING .......... 23

2.1 English language teaching in the context of globalisation ............................................... 23
2.2 English language teaching and the dominance of the communicative approach ............ 25
  2.2.1 Communicative competence ......................................................................................... 26
  2.2.2 Communicative language teaching in practice ............................................................. 27
2.3 English language teaching and English as a lingua franca .............................................. 29
2.4 English language teaching and culture ............................................................................. 32
  2.4.1 Language and culture – beyond an essentialist understanding .................................... 33
  2.4.2 Implications for English language teaching ................................................................. 34
2.5 English language teaching and Pragmatics ..................................................................... 35
  2.5.1 Cross-cultural pragmatics ............................................................................................ 35
  2.5.2 Interlanguage pragmatics ............................................................................................ 37
  2.5.3 Pragmatics and English language teaching: obstacles to practice ............................. 41
  2.5.4 English use and pragmatics teaching in the expanding circle .................................... 43
2.6 Summary and Implications ............................................................................................... 44

## CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ......................................... 47

3.1 Pragmatics – A Perspective on Language ......................................................................... 48
3.2 Verschueren’s Pragmatic Perspective .............................................................. 50
  3.2.1 Elements of the meaningful functioning of language .............................. 51
3.3 Adopting a critical stance ............................................................................. 53
  3.3.1 Critical Pragmatics .................................................................................. 54
  3.3.2 A Critical Discourse Analysis approach ................................................. 54
3.4 Conclusion ..................................................................................................... 57

CHAPTER 4: THE METHODOLOGY ................................................................... 59

4.1 Designing the Research ................................................................................. 60
4.2 Methods of Data Generation ......................................................................... 63
  4.2.1 Document Collection .............................................................................. 63
  4.2.2 Video Recording ...................................................................................... 64
  4.2.3 Semi-structured Interviews ..................................................................... 64
  4.2.4 Stimulated Recall Interviews .................................................................. 66
4.3 Analytic Method ............................................................................................ 67
  4.3.1 Analytic toolkit ........................................................................................ 68
4.4 Validity and Credibility ................................................................................ 71
4.5 Conclusion ..................................................................................................... 71

CHAPTER 5: THE STUDY ............................................................................... 73

5.1 The Case ......................................................................................................... 73
5.2 The Coursebook ............................................................................................ 74
  5.2.1 Coursebook Components ....................................................................... 75
5.3 The Classes ..................................................................................................... 76
5.4 The Participants ............................................................................................. 79
  5.4.1 The Teachers .......................................................................................... 79
  5.4.2 The Students .......................................................................................... 80
5.5 The Research Plan ........................................................................................ 81
5.6 Generating the Data ...................................................................................... 82
5.7 Ethical Clearance .......................................................................................... 84
5.8 The Data Chapters ......................................................................................... 85

CHAPTER 6: PRAGMATIC CONSIDERATIONS IN A GLOBAL ELT COURSEBOOK ... 89

6.1 Coursebooks as Genres of Governance ....................................................... 90
6.2 Hemispheres – A Global ELT Course ........................................................... 90
  6.2.1 The Hemispheres 2 Coursebook .............................................................. 92
6.3 The Conversation Strategy Section .............................................................. 101
  6.3.1 External Evaluation ................................................................................ 102
  6.3.2 Internal Evaluation ................................................................................ 109
6.4 Pragmatics in the Conversation Strategy Starting Conversations ............... 128
6.5 Discussion .................................................................................................... 135
6.6 Conclusion .................................................................................................... 138

CHAPTER 7: PRAGMATICS AND TEACHING EFL ....................................... 141

7.1 Hemispheres 2 – Institutional Guidelines and Teachers’ Prevalent Practices ... 142
7.2 Teachers’ Views and Decision Making: Recontextualising Hemispheres 2 for English Language Learners ................................................................. 145
  7.2.1 Summary ................................................................................................ 152
7.3 Recontextualising Pragmatics – Classroom Interactions ................................ 153
  7.3.1 Presenting the Conversation Strategies ................................................. 155
7.3.2 Classroom Activities ................................................................. 166
7.4 Discussion .................................................................................................................. 180
7.5 Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 188

CHAPTER 8: EFL STUDENTS AS ENGLISH LANGUAGE USERS ................. 191
8.1 Students’ Contexts of English Language Use ...................................................... 193
  8.1.1 Summary ................................................................................................. 200
8.2 Recontextualising Pragmatics: Students’ Uptake of the Conversation Strategies .... 200
  8.2.1 Students’ Responses to the Conversation Strategies .................................. 201
  8.2.2 Students’ Classroom Practices .................................................................... 206
  8.2.3 Students’ Linguistic Choice-making: Interpreting, Learning and Using the
        Conversation Strategies .............................................................................. 213
  8.2.4 Summary .................................................................................................. 228
8.3 Discussion .................................................................................................................. 228
8.4 Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 234

CHAPTER 9: RECONCEPTUALISING PRAGMATICS IN EFL CONTEXTS:
IMPLICATIONS FOR COURSEBOOK DESIGN, TEACHING AND LEARNING ............. 235
9.1 Summary and Synthesis of the Study’s Findings .................................................... 237
9.2 Key issues in the teaching and learning of pragmatics in EFL contexts .................. 241
  9.2.1 Representations of context ......................................................................... 242
  9.2.2 Approaches to language and culture - from detachment to dexterity .......... 245
  9.2.3 Understandings of English and English language use .................................. 247
  9.2.4 ELT Methodology and Pragmatics .............................................................. 250
  9.2.5 EFL students as strategic English language users ....................................... 251
  9.2.6 Summary .................................................................................................. 252
9.3 Methodological Contributions .............................................................................. 254
9.4 Limitations .............................................................................................................. 255
9.5 Recommendations For Practice .......................................................................... 256
9.6 Recommendations for Future Research .............................................................. 258

REFERENCES ................................................................................................................. 261

APPENDICES .............................................................................................................. 277
  Appendix A: Conversation Strategy Student Book Example (Cameron, Renn, et al.,
               2008, p. 71) ........................................................................................................... 277
  Appendix B: Conversation Strategy Workbook Example (Johannsen, 2008, p. 48) .... 278
  Appendix C: Conversation Strategy Teacher’s Manual Example (Renn & Cameron,
               2008, p. T71) ........................................................................................................... 279
  Appendix D: Conversation Strategy Workbook Key Example (Renn & Cameron, 2008,
               p. T120) .................................................................................................................. 280
  Appendix E: Teacher Interview Schedule ............................................................... 281
  Appendix F: Student Interview Schedule ............................................................... 283
  Appendix G: Teacher Interview Excerpt ................................................................. 285
  Appendix H: Matt’s Handout for the Conversation Strategy Asking about and
               Expressing Preferences ................................................................................... 286
  Appendix I: Student Interview Transcript .............................................................. 287
  Appendix J: Summary of students’ accounts of their English language use .......... 293
List of Figures

Figure 3.1. Verschueren’s Model of Pragmatics (1999, p. 67) ........................................................................... 53
Figure 3.2. The study’s theoretical framework ............................................................................................... 57
Figure 5.1. The genre chain of the study ........................................................................................................ 87
Figure 6.1. A Conversation Strategy Lesson (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 71) ............................................ 104
Figure 6.2. Conversation Strategy Workbook Activities (Johannsen, 2008, p. 48) ............................................ 107
Figure 6.3. Teacher’s manual notes (Renn & Cameron, 2008, p. T71) ............................................................ 108
Figure 6.4. A Conversation Dialogue (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 63) ....................................................... 110
Figure 6.5. Student book Conversation Strategy activity (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 63) ..................... 112
Figure 6.6. A workbook activity for Offering, Accepting and Declining Invitations (Johannsen, 2008, p. 24) ........................................................................................................................................ 114
Figure 6.7. A student book activity for the Conversation Strategy Helping People Make Decisions (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 63) ......................................................................................................................... 116
Figure 6.8. A student book activity from the Conversation Strategy Offering, Accepting and Declining Invitations (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 35) ................................................................. 120
Figure 6.9. The Conversation Strategy Offering, Accepting, and Declining Invitations (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 35) ......................................................................................................................... 124
Figure 6.10. The Conversation Strategy Starting Conversations (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 7) ................. 130
Figure 7.1. Owen’s first dialogue .................................................................................................................. 155
Figure 7.2. Owen’s second dialogue .............................................................................................................. 156
Figure 7.3. Michael’s presentation of the Conversation Strategy Discussing Opinions .................................. 163
Figure 7.4. Asking About and Expressing Preferences Workbook Activity (Johannsen, 2008, p. 12) ............... 172
Figure 7.5. Using Exclamations to Express Opinions Workbook Activity A (Johannsen, 2008, p. 48) ......... 173
List of Tables

Table 5.1 The Research Plan ................................................................................................................ 76
Table 5.2 The Teachers ........................................................................................................................ 80
Table 5.3 The Students ......................................................................................................................... 80
Table 5.4 Timeframe for Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting ...................................................... 81
Table 6.1 Regions and countries represented in Hemispheres 2 Acknowledgements section .......... 92
Table 6.2 Gender representation in the Conversation Strategies ....................................................... 119
Table 7.1 Implementing Hemispheres 2 in Level 9 at BELS ............................................................... 143
Table 7.2 The Conversation Strategies taught and not taught ............................................................ 146
Table 7.3 Teachers’ Views of the Conversation Strategies ................................................................. 148
Table 7.4 Teachers’ Classroom Activities ........................................................................................... 166
Table 7.5 Role-plays and skits ............................................................................................................. 175
Table 7.6 Owen’s topic choices .......................................................................................................... 177
Table 7.7 Matt’s topic choices ............................................................................................................ 178
Table 8.1 Students’ reported uses of English ...................................................................................... 194
Table 9.1 Recontextualising Pragmatics from Coursebook to Classroom interactions to Student accounts/representations ................................................................. 239
**List of Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a foreign language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELF</td>
<td>English as a lingua franca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENL</td>
<td>English as a native language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELT</td>
<td>English language teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td>Native speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS</td>
<td>Non-native speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>First language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILP</td>
<td>Interlanguage pragmatics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TESOL</td>
<td>Teaching English to speakers of other languages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching Pragmatics in an EFL Context: Implications for Coursebook Design, Teaching and Learning viii
Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature:

Date: 29/10/15
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Chapter 1: Introduction

This study is about the socially constrained and highly contextual nature of English language use, and how this is taught, learned and utilised in and beyond English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. It is a case study of a General English class in a private language school in Thailand, a country where English has no official status but is nonetheless, like many countries throughout the world, engaged in English as a contact language for purposes of business, diplomacy, media and so on. The ever-increasing global use of English has resulted in a diversified use of English stretching beyond traditional native speaker and non-native speaker boundaries (or first, second or foreign language contexts). Accordingly, English as a lingua franca (ELF) - a shared contact language of communication for speakers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds - has emerged as an important field of linguistic research with significant implications for English language teaching and learning (Jenkins, Cogo, & Dewey, 2011). Central to ELF interactions is the ability to negotiate meaning drawing on a broad toolkit of interactional, gestural and linguistic resources, or in other words, a pragmatic repertoire (Canagarajah, 2007; House, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011). Pragmatic resources become highly salient in interactions where people do not share a common first language. It follows that pragmatics – how language functions cognitively, socially, and culturally in human interaction (Verschueren, 2009) – is highly relevant in English language teaching in ELF classroom contexts.

This study explores the teaching of pragmatics to adults in a General English class in an English language school in Thailand. Thailand is considered representative of countries where English is not an official language but is nonetheless in wide use and a key focus of teaching. The issue of interest for the study is how English language pragmatics-related teaching and materials, align with and meet students’ needs. Of particular importance are representations and realisations of pragmatics in coursebooks and by teachers in their classroom practices. The representations and realisations of pragmatics are important because they carry with them underlying assumptions and values, and position participants in particular ways. As such, they are a channel through which relations of power are
reproduced (Fairclough, 1995). This theoretical framing is discussed further in Chapter Three. The focus of the study has implications for English language teaching materials design and pedagogy.

This chapter begins with a presentation of the key concepts relating to the study (Section 1.1). The background (Section 1.2) and context (Section 1.3) to the study are then outlined. This is followed by a discussion, in section 1.4, of the significance of pragmatics. Section 1.5 then presents the objectives of the study, including the research questions focusing on the role of pragmatics in English language teaching given the predominant use of English as a lingua franca in the chosen context. The personal background of the researcher as it relates to the study is explained in section 1.6. This is followed by an overview of the research design in section 1.7 and a discussion of the significance of the research in Section 1.8. Finally, an outline of the remainder of the thesis will be given (Section 1.9).

1.1 KEY CONCEPTS

Pragmatics

Central to this study is the concept of pragmatics. Pragmatics is “an approach to language which takes into account the full complexity of its cognitive, social, and cultural (i.e. ‘meaningful’) functioning in the lives of human beings” (Verschueren, 2009, p. 19, italics removed). It is a perspective on language which foregrounds the language user over theoretical grammar and acknowledges the centrality of context in the creation and interpretation of meaning (Mey, 2001).

However, much of the research on pragmatics in foreign language classrooms appears to have adopted a narrower definition of pragmatics, focusing on particular functions of pragmatic interactions, such as requests, refusals, compliments, greetings, or leave-taking (Alcón Soler & Martínez-Flor, 2008a; Ishihara, 2010; Taguchi, 2011). This has reinforced a view of pragmatics as a set of isolated linguistic forms used to enact social functions, a component view of pragmatics, in contrast to the broader perspective outlined above of pragmatics as socially and culturally contextualised language use (Taguchi, 2011). This study seeks to restore a more comprehensive definition of pragmatics to foreign language teaching and learning, one in which the language users and context are central to the negotiation of meaning in interaction.
Pragmatics and Spoken Interaction

While pragmatics is relevant to both written and spoken communication, this study focuses on spoken interaction. It is important to note that interaction here does not refer exclusively to interactional organisation, as in the object of analysis in conversational analysis (CA). It refers to all aspects of direct, verbal communication between interlocutors. This study explored the teaching of pragmatics as it manifested in the classroom. Part of pragmatics-related teaching is achieved through coursebooks. In the coursebook which forms the curriculum of the General English class investigated in this study, a pragmatics-related component is ‘Conversation Strategies’. Of interest are the ways in which these strategies are interpreted by the teachers and students in the Thai context as well as the teachers’ and students’ perceptions of their relevance in situations where students are using ELF beyond the classroom.

English as a lingua franca versus English as an international language

Pragmatics in spoken interaction is highly relevant and problematic in English language teaching given the increasingly diversified uses and contexts of English. The global spread of English has led to new characterisations of English and Englishes. English as an international language (EIL) and English as a lingua franca (ELF) are two such characterisations. The terms EIL and ELF have been used in similar ways in the literature with a shared aim of recognising the increasingly diversified uses of English beyond ‘native speaker’ norms. McKay (2010, p. 95) defines English as an international language as “the use of English between any two L2 speakers of English, whether sharing the same culture or not, as well as between L2 and L1 speakers of English”.

Jenkins (2006a), however, expresses concern that the term ‘EIL’ may lead to misunderstandings that EIL is a clearly identifiable variety of English which is contrary to what studies on the subject have found. Furthermore, Jenkins (2006a) sees EIL as commonly associated with the spread of ‘native speaker’ Englishes. Jenkins (2006a) argues that English as a lingua franca (ELF) is a more suitable term. ELF is defined in a similar way to EIL, as involving communication in English between participants who have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, whether English is their first language or not (Jenkins, 2006a; Seidlhofer, 2004). Lingua franca languages are often understood as the chosen language of communication.
between individuals who have different first languages from the language used to communicate. Although this may be representative of much ELF use, ‘native speakers’ of English also engage in international communication through English. While it is understood that ‘native speakers’ use English as a lingua franca for international communication, the norms of ELF communication are not driven by the ‘native speaker’ (Jenkins, 2006a; Seidlhofer, 2004). A key element of both ELF and EIL is that distinctions between different kinds of English users such as native speakers or foreign language users are not important. The focus instead is on successfully negotiating meaning (House, 2010; Jenkins, 2006b; McKay, 2010; Seidlhofer, 2009).

Characterisations of English as outlined above are particularly relevant to this study in positioning English as disembedded from the culture of the traditionally privileged ‘native speaking’ English countries. However, this is more clearly the case in definitions of ELF and for this reason I use the term ELF throughout this thesis. I use ELF in reference to English language use in an international context as a lingua franca between two or more people with different first languages in line with Jenkins (2006a) while recognising that English continues to be taught with reference to ‘native speaker’ norms in English as a foreign language contexts such as Thailand. The incongruence between the predominant use of English as a lingua franca and the teaching of ‘native speaker’ English in English as a Foreign language contexts is a key element of the research problem this study seeks to address.

**Discourse**

This study takes a Critical Discourse Analytic approach following Fairclough (1995, 2001, 2003) in examining the representations of pragmatics in an English language coursebook as taught by teachers and taken up by students in a Thai EFL context. Discourse in linguistic terms is predominantly viewed as text, that is, stretches of language in use (Gee, 2003). However, in adopting a critical approach, discourse in this study is understood to be social practice (Fairclough, 1995), in other words, both social and linguistic. Discourse here is seen as mediating the relationship between context and text where textual analysis seeks to uncover the social meanings of people’s texts. Fairclough’s social theory of discourse and its contribution to the theoretical framing of the study will be explored further in Chapter Three.
1.2 BACKGROUND

This section will provide background to the present study by exploring the use of English internationally. It will begin with an examination of the use of English globally within the context of globalisation. English as a lingua franca (ELF) will then be discussed followed by an overview of its use in Asia and Thailand in particular.

1.2.1 English language use in the context of globalisation

English is estimated to be spoken by up to a third of the world’s population (Crystal, 2008). The growing worldwide use of English has emerged within the context of globalisation (Dewey, 2007). Taking a transformationalist perspective, globalisation is defined in this study as

a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and exercise of power (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 2003, p. 68).

Central to this perspective are notions of fluidity, hybridity, interconnection, and diversity. This is in contrast with perspectives which see globalisation as a domineering and homogenising force. While not all global flows are equal, those perspectives of globalisation concerned with hegemony and homogenisation fail to account for the diversity arising from increasing interconnectedness (Dewey, 2007; Fairclough, 2006; Mufwene, 2010).

Within a transformationalist framework, English, seen as both globalised and globalising, is continually negotiated across diverse, dynamic, and changeable contexts (Baker, 2011b; Jenkins et al., 2011; Pennycook, 2009). Furthermore, given its fundamental role in the context of globalisation, English has been afforded a significant amount of power (Kachru, 1992). As such, capturing the dynamic and critical nature of global English language use has been a complex and contentious undertaking. One of the most prominent models of world Englishes is that of Kachru (1992) which delineates three concentric circles of English language use: the inner circle consisting of ‘native’ English speaking countries such as the US; the outer circle with countries using English as a second language such as India or Singapore;
and the expanding circle containing countries which use English for international communication or as a foreign language such as Thailand or Japan. The inner and outer circle countries are seen as imposing English language ‘norms’ on expanding circle countries. This is supported by what appears to be a preference for Standard American or British English in English language schools, English language teaching materials, and by English language learners in expanding circle countries (Masuhara & Tomlinson, 2008).

Kachru’s (1992) model has been influential in legitimising world Englishes and their users where people use their own varieties of English in local, international and intercultural contexts. However, more recently, a geography-based model of world Englishes such as Kachru’s (1992) has been called into question given our increasing global and regional interconnectedness (Pennycook, 2009; Yano, 2009). Yano (2009, p. 216) proposes a three dimensional cylindrical model of world Englishes based on individual proficiency with English as an International Language (EIL) at the top of the scale representing “the ultimate level of proficiency for cross-regional or international communication”. In Yano’s (2009) model, the function of EIL is to comprehend, communicate with and convey a range of cultures. Hybridity and accommodation are considered to be defining elements of EIL with ‘native speakers’ no longer providing English language ‘norms’ (Yano, 2009). Pennycook (2009) argues that a plurilithic model of English – in which no particular English-speaking centre is seen to determine the use of English in a particular context – is a more accurate reflection of the dynamic nature of the global spread and use of English. Pennycook’s (2009) model reflects the diversity of users’ linguistic resources, the contextual use of these resources, and how the speakers themselves are positioned socially, economically and culturally. This is particularly apparent in contexts where English is primarily used between speakers of different first languages (Pennycook, 2009). Pennycook’s (2009) model acknowledges the global reality of English as a lingua franca. However, it does not address the widespread ‘native speaker’ bias and, in not doing so, it erases the power imbalance between ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ speakers of English that predominates in representations of English language use.

1.2.2 English as a lingua franca

As Crystal (2008) asserts, English is now most commonly used between people whose first language is a language other than English. This is especially the case in
expanding circle contexts such as Thailand, contrary to the traditional association of English as a foreign language with these contexts. Accordingly, English as a lingua franca (ELF), “an additionally acquired language system which serves as a common means of communication for speakers of different first languages” (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 283), has become the subject of significant research. ELF is viewed as fluid, situated, negotiated, and hybrid, yet with its own phonological, grammatical, lexical and pragmatic markers (Jenkins et al., 2011). While several regularities in ELF use have been found, the defining features of ELF interactions appear to be their variability and fluidity (Jenkins et al., 2011; Seidlhofer, 2009). ELF users have been found to make innovative use of English to successfully negotiate meaning in interactions (Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2009).

The increasingly diverse contexts in which English is put to use, particularly in the case of ELF, contradict the traditional implied geographical boundedness of linguistic ‘varieties’ and ‘speech communities’ (Seidlhofer, 2009). As Seidlhofer (2009, p. 239) asserts,

In the early 21st century, it seems clear that there are English-using communities not only in the Inner and Outer Circle but also English-using local, regional, and global communities of practice communicating via ELF in the Expanding Circle and, importantly, across all circles.

This is in line with the observations of Yano (2009) and Pennycook (2009) who problematise the notion of a geographically bound model of global English use (see Section 1.2.1). An alternative conceptualisation is needed. To this end, Seidlhofer (2009) argues that the concept of communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), bounded as shared social practices, is a more suitable representation of the contexts of global English use. Crucially, ELF communication operates outside of ‘native speaker’ and ‘non-native speaker’ distinctions affirming more diverse uses of English no longer reliant upon Inner Circle norms.

The dynamic nature of ELF use described here sits in contrast to understandings of ELF as its own static variety, and to concerns that ELF research is attempting to impose a monolithic model of English language use (Rubdy & Saraceni, 2006). Proponents of ELF point out that the objective of codifying ELF is not to establish another monolithic variety (Jenkins et al., 2011; Seidlhofer, 2009). Indeed, it has been argued that it cannot be considered a variety in its traditional
sociolinguistic interpretation. Rather, corpus-based research aims to substantiate ELF’s existence in the field of linguistics given its prevalence and provide insight into the processes that underlie the linguistic choices that are made in ELF interactions (Jenkins et al., 2011; Seidlhofer, 2009). These descriptive studies in seeking to understand and identify core features of ELF interactions imply the introduction of a static variety. However, they simultaneously highlight the fluid and situated nature of ELF. For example, Jenks (2012) in his study of multi-participant voice-based chat rooms found that ELF users in this context drew attention to and criticised communication problems. These findings add complexity to the findings of previous studies which have found ELF users to be co-operative and mutually-supportive in interaction (Firth, 1996; House, 1996; Kordon, 2006). In addition, the findings highlight the important role of context in ELF interactions.

Still, the growing orthodoxy around ELF remains a concern and the subject of criticism and debate. One of the debates that emerged recently has been an exchange between O’Regan and Widdowson in Applied Linguistics. O’Regan (2014) offered an immanent critique of ELF maintaining that ELF has been reified and hypostatized as a concrete form by discourses of what he refers to as the ELF movement. This notion was countered by Widdowson (2015) who argues that O’Regan’s criticism rests on the idea of English being a hypostatized given and on ELF research being viewed as an ideological ‘movement’. To date a lot of the work around ELF is more descriptive. However, there is some concern around a gradually accumulating orthodoxy that is reductive and not expansive. ELF is an attempt to look at English language use in its multiplicity, but what has happened as it has become a field is that it has become reductive. ELF as an umbrella term has become monolithic in how it is understood and viewed, losing its multiplicity and complexity. Park and Wee (2011) usefully suggest that ELF is best understood from a practice-based perspective “which treats language not as a fixed structural system with static rules but as an emergent product of speakers’ practices in local contexts” (p.361). This perspective aligns with the understanding of pragmatics taken in this study in which context is seen as central to the creation and interpretation of meaning. I explain this perspective of pragmatics in detail in Chapter 3.
1.2.3 The use of English as a lingua franca in Asia and Thailand

English is increasingly depicted as the lingua franca of Asia (Bolton, 2008; Kachru, 2005; Kirkpatrick, 2007, 2011; McArthur, 2003; Murata & Jenkins, 2009). While exact numbers of English language users in this context are difficult to estimate with accuracy, the spread of English language use across the region is considered to be vast (Bolton, 2008; Kachru, 2005; McArthur, 2003). Bolton (2008, p. 7) estimates that there are around 812 million users of English across East Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. As Murata and Jenkins (2009, p. 2) observe,

Asia is currently one of the most exciting regions of the world, one in which we can witness dynamic uses of English for various practical reasons, including social, cultural, economic and political ones, and they can also be said to be one of the most prominent regions in which the future of English resides.

This observation is exemplified in the decision of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to adopt English as its official language (Kirkpatrick, 2011). Ten nations form ASEAN, each with their own rich linguacultural contexts. However, as Kirkpatrick (2010) shows, the nations of ASEAN view English as the language of knowledge formation and distribution, enabling their participation in processes of modernisation. The ASEAN Socio-cultural Community Blueprint (2009) identifies the promotion of English language use as a critical part of what it refers to as ‘human development’ and, as one of its strategic objectives, aims to advance English as the language of international business in the workplace.

While the use of English as the lingua franca is a growing reality across Asia, proficiency and ‘standards’ of English remain central to discussions around English language use, particularly among those with business and commercial concerns (Bolton, 2008). ‘Native speaker’ norms continue to be the benchmark against which proficiency is measured with scores from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) performing gate-keeping functions for many business and educational institutions (Bolton, 2008).

With the market integration of the ASEAN Economic Community planned for 2015, English proficiency concerns are especially heightened in Southeast Asia, in particular Thailand (Chanchokpong, 2012; Marukatat, 2012). As with a number of
other Asian countries, it is perceived that English as a lingua franca is a critical component of Thailand’s development in terms of its ability to establish cultural, intellectual and commercial links both regionally and internationally (Baker, 2008; Foley, 2005; Wongsothorn, Hiranburana, & Chinnawongs, 2002). While Thai is the only official language in Thailand, English is the predominant language of intercultural communication there, and as such, Thailand is, at this stage, best described as an ELF context (Baker, 2008). It follows that the ability to communicate successfully in English as a lingua franca is important for Thai English language learners with significant social, political and economic implications.

1.3 CONTEXT

1.3.1 English in Thailand

In Thailand, ‘standard Thai’ is the official first language and there are no official second languages despite there being around sixty non-foreign languages spoken in the country (Luangthongkum, 2007). The dominance of Thai in an otherwise linguistically heterogeneous population results from government policies aiming to promote national unity for security and integration purposes (Darasawang & Watson Todd, 2012; Luangthongkum, 2007). Historically, no foreign languages have gained official status despite mass immigration. For example, while close to half of the Thai population are descendants of Chinese immigrants, current generations mostly no longer speak a Chinese language (Luangthongkum, 2007). Furthermore, unlike many neighbouring countries, Thailand has never been colonised by a Western power (Rappa & Wee, 2006). Nonetheless, English has become an important focus in Thailand.

The instrumental value of English has been recognised since the mid-1800s by Thai monarchy for diplomacy and business purposes.

As such, while initially restricted to members of nobility, English language education became more widely available and came to be seen as one way of achieving social mobility since a good knowledge of the language was a sure way of obtaining senior posts in government. (Rappa & Wee, 2006, p. 107)

English has come to be associated with privilege. The status of English as a foreign language has grown much stronger over time given its perceived value in the global marketplace and while its use is more restricted than in other countries across Asia,
English is currently the main foreign language in Thailand (Darasawang & Watson Todd, 2012; Luangthongkum, 2007; Rappa & Wee, 2006). For Thais, as in other parts of Asia, English is associated with modernisation and socio-economic success (Darasawang & Watson Todd, 2012; Kirkpatrick, 2011; Luangthongkum, 2007; Rappa & Wee, 2006). According to Keyuravong (2010), in Thailand, English leads to better educational and career opportunities.

While historically Thailand’s language policies have been oriented towards nationalistic concerns, in 1996, English was made a compulsory subject from Year One (age 6) through to Year Twelve (age 18) in the Thai education system and, in 2008, it was included in the Basic Education Core Curriculum (Darasawang & Watson Todd, 2012; Ministry of Education (MOE), 2008; Wongsothorn et al., 2002). Prior to 1996, English had been an elective only available in high school, Year Seven to Twelve. The goal of English education in Thailand is to facilitate learners’ communicative competence, linguistic knowledge, academic English, career advancement, and linguistic and cultural appreciation (Wongsothorn et al., 2002). The impact of globalisation on Thailand has seen an increase in multinational companies, international education, and tourism and a subsequent increase in intercultural communication. Furthermore, Thailand’s involvement in ASEAN has seen the Ministry of Education create policy to prepare Thai students to become a part of the ASEAN community (Chanchokpong, 2012; Kijchalong, 2007; Marukatat, 2012; Singh, 2012; Yamwagee, 2011). Part of this preparation involves a focus on English education in order to be able to communicate with people from neighbouring countries. To this end, 2012 was named the “Year of Speaking English” (Bangkok Post, 2011). With the establishment of the ASEAN economic community, global technological change, increasing internationalisation, and the growing recognition of English as a lingua franca for international communication, it follows that English should continue to play a vital role in Thailand’s language policies (Keyuravong, 2010). However, given Thailand’s linguistic history and concern for national unity, it is not certain how the role of English in Thai education will develop.

1.3.2 English language education in Thailand

As previously mentioned, learning English is compulsory for Thai students from Year One to Year Twelve. It is now included in the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) for Thai schools (Ministry of Education (MOE),
The English language curriculum has, as its basis, four interconnected components – culture, connection, community and communication (Wongsothorn et al., 2002). However the implementation of the English curriculum has met with several obstacles. These have been identified as a content-heavy curriculum; students not being prepared for the level at which they are studying; teachers inadequately prepared and overworked; inadequate materials, insufficient equipment, large class sizes, a lack of funding, unsuitable assessment; and students being unable to apply their learning to other contexts (Wongsothorn et al., 2002). In addition, the overall English language proficiency of Thai English language teachers is considered to be inadequate based on test results of Thailand’s Office of Basic Education Commission, resulting in Thai being the predominantly spoken language in the English classroom (Foley, 2005; Kijchalong, 2007; Wongsothorn et al., 2002).

Consequently, schools struggle to implement the more communicatively-orientated language programmes prescribed in the curriculum. To assist in English language education, the Thai Ministry of Education has recommended course books to be used in teaching English. However, these have been found to be grammar-focused, dominated by native speaker norms, based on American or British English culture, and with mainly closed-ended language exercises (Darasawang & Watson Todd, 2012). The recommended resources appear to be in contradiction with the communicative goals of the national curriculum. This is compounded by the high stakes university entrance exams which examine only reading skills and grammar knowledge leading to a lack of focus on other skills in the classroom, particularly writing and speaking (Wongsothorn et al., 2002). Furthermore, at the university level, there appears to be a preference for globally-produced materials from ‘native-speaker’ contexts (Dat, 2008). Forman (2014), in his study of Thai university English language teachers, found global English language coursebooks to be problematic due to their content, their assumptions about audience, and the lack of relevance to students.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the English language proficiency of Thai English language learners is of wide concern in Thailand and is, furthermore, considered to be low in comparison with other countries (Chanchokpong, 2012; Darasawang & Watson Todd, 2012; Keyuravong, 2010; Luangthongkum, 2007; Marukatat, 2012; Singh, 2012). In 2010, Thailand ranked 116 out of 163 countries on the Test of
English as a foreign language (TOEFL) (Educational Testing Service, 2010; Sanyal, 2012). While the relevance of tests such as TOEFL have been called into question in international contexts such as Thailand given their bias toward ‘native speaker’ norms (Jenkins, 2006a, 2006b), these results are still concerning and have raised questions regarding the effectiveness of English language education in Thailand.

Outside the mainstream education system in Thailand, those students who can afford it pay considerable money to attend private language schools in an effort to improve their English given its perceived value. Private language schools are widespread and cater to varying age levels, starting with parents choosing private lessons for their children to the focus age group of this study - adults choosing lessons for themselves. It is within these contexts that the commercialisation of English (see Section 2.1) is perhaps most evident. However, to date there does not appear to be any research into private English language classrooms in Thailand. This study seeks to fill this gap and provide insight into this arena of English language teaching in Thailand.

A number of local and international private English language schools for adults operate in Thailand with the highest concentration of schools in Bangkok, some with a nationwide network of branches. Various courses are offered including general English, test preparation courses such as IELTS, TOEIC or TOEFL, business English courses, and academic English courses. The average length of a course is 30 hours offered in six to eight week terms. Depending on the school, 30 hour courses can cost from 2000 baht to upward of 8000 baht. Classes are generally made available outside of regular working hours, seven days a week, with lessons between one and three hours in length. Class sizes are approximately 15-20 students. Students include adults who are learning English for work purposes, and students who are attending the language school as a supplement to the English language program of their school or university. A crucial characteristic of students at private language schools is that they are generally motivated to learn English having chosen to enrol in English classes for personal, academic or professional purposes.

1.3.3 The place of spoken interaction in Thai English language education

Given the ‘communicative’ focus of the Thai English language curriculum, spoken interaction should arguably be an important goal in Thai English language education. However, there is also evidence, as outlined above, to suggest that this
goal may be difficult to achieve. Khamkhien (2010) argues that there are a number of factors influencing spoken interaction in Thai English language classrooms, including the poor implementation of the curriculum-endorsed communicative approach, a lack of support and training for Thai English language teachers, incompatible test formats, lack of opportunity to use English outside the classroom, and a tendency for spoken interaction to be dominated by the teacher in the English language classroom. Khamkhien (2010) emphasises the importance of addressing all aspects of spoken interaction – grammar, pronunciation and pragmatics. While the teaching of spoken interaction in English is clearly a concern in the Thai context, there appears to have been little research into this area (Chinokul & Pattanapichet, 2011; Pattanapichet, 2011). This study aims to contribute to this under-researched area.

As previously discussed, there does not appear to have been any research into private English language schools in Thailand. Private language schools provide a substantive context for research given that students are learning English for diverse purposes. The Bangkok English Language School (BELS) (a pseudonym), where this study took place, is located in Bangkok and attracts students from a variety of backgrounds – high school students, university students, and workers – who are primarily learning English for academic or career advancement. Socio-economically the students are primarily middle class. While many students are from Bangkok, there are also students from other provinces in Thailand who have moved to Bangkok for work or study. Based on my own experience working there, classes are usually comprised of approximately seventy percent female students to thirty percent male. The teachers are mostly ‘native speakers’ from the United States, the United Kingdom, or Australia. Those who are ‘non-native speakers’ have native-like proficiency and come from a variety of countries including Mexico, Thailand, and the Philippines.

There are sixteen levels in the certificate course offered at BELS, from high beginner to upper intermediate. Each level comprises a 30 hour course. The course books constitute the curriculum with three chapters covered during each six-week term. At the time of the study, Levels 1-4, high beginner, used *New Interchange Intro* (J. Richards, 2005). Levels 5-8, low intermediate, used *Hemispheres 1* (Cameron, Iannuzzi, & Vargo, 2007). Levels 9-12, intermediate, used *Hemispheres 2*
Levels 13-15, upper intermediate, used *Hemispheres 3* (Cameron, Iannuzzi, Maynard, & Scarry, 2008) and level 16, upper intermediate, used materials created by the language school. The books used in the course are compatible with a communicative approach focusing on the four macroskills – reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Spoken interaction is a specific pedagogical focus in the *Hemispheres* series in what is called ‘Conversation Strategies’, a section which appears once in each chapter of the books. Students are tested in levels 4, 8, 12 and 16. However, it is not until level 16 that students are tested on speaking. Prior to that, emphasis in tests is on grammar, listening, reading and writing. Classes are generally 10-25 students in size. There are two classes per week for six weeks each term. The classes are two and a half hours long. The focus of this study was classes in which the teaching of ‘Conversation Strategies’ took place in order to explore the teaching of spoken interaction, specifically pragmatics.

### 1.4 WHY PRAGMATICS?

Research into the use of ELF indicates that the negotiation of meaning is paramount to English as a lingua franca communication (Canagarajah, 2007; House, 2003, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011). Additionally, interculturality, pragmatics, and accommodation skills are at the core of ELF interactions (Canagarajah, 2007; House, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011). As such, ELF users need to be flexibly competent in intercultural communication (McKay, 2003b, 2009). To achieve this, a comprehensive awareness of the sociocultural complexity and potential of English language use is needed (McKay, 2003b, 2009). In addition, central to ELF pragmatics is the notion that each interaction is unique and a space for negotiating various meanings and identities. Therefore, an awareness of the dynamic, fluid and situated nature of language and culture is critical in developing competence in pragmatics in English as a lingua franca (McKay, 2009).

It follows that English language teaching in ELF contexts should focus on developing learners’ pragmatic awareness (Canagarajah, 2007; Cogo & Dewey, 2006; House, 2010). As Baker (2011a, p. 63) contends,

> “for users of English to communicate effectively, they will need a mastery of more than the features of syntax, lexis, and phonology that are the traditional focus in ELT. Equally important is the ability to make use of linguistic and other communicative resources in the negotiation of meaning, roles, and
relationships in the diverse sociocultural settings of intercultural communication through English”.

This is the domain of pragmatics. The emphasis is on the language user and their ability to communicate successfully in English in diverse contexts.

1.5 RESEARCH AIMS

Greater recognition is being attributed to the diversity of Englishes and purposes of English use throughout the world. The field in terms of research is increasingly marked by debates about approaches to this diversification, especially in relation to teaching. With the approaching ASEAN community agreement to be enacted in 2015, it is clear that English education is and will continue to be a significant focus for Thailand. Under the ASEAN agreement, jobs in international companies in Thailand will become available to the wider ASEAN community and for Thais to be competitive, high level English language skills are essential. The role of English as a lingua franca in Thailand will become even more apparent. Interactions in English as a lingua franca are highly contextual and culturalised, and the negotiation of meaning is paramount. It is therefore important to examine how students are taught to interact in English in Thailand, especially given the widespread use of commercially-produced and globally-oriented English language coursebooks in Thai ELT classrooms which often guide the curriculum. The diversification of English and English use globally appears to be in contradiction with the teaching of a monolithic ‘English’ in English as a Foreign Language classrooms. My study took this discourse-related problem as its starting point in accordance with the CDA method I used (Fairclough, 2003). In order to understand the problem with greater clarity and make a contribution towards solving it, this study investigated pragmatics in an English language classroom in Thailand.

(How) is pragmatics taught in English language classrooms in Thailand? How useful is this teaching for English language learners in Thailand? This study examines the teaching of pragmatics in a Thai English language classroom with the aim of revealing what is actually going on in terms of contextual language use. Previous research into pragmatics and English language teaching and learning has tended to focus on discrete features such as a particular speech act or discourse marker (Alcón Soler & Martínez-Flor, 2008a; Ishihara, 2010; Taguchi, 2011). Little
appears to be known about the broader role of pragmatics in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms in contexts such as Thailand where English has no official status. This study seeks to fill this gap. Furthermore, previous studies, regardless of their theoretical concern with context, have often looked at a specific linguistic feature without exploring deeply how it is locally understood and enacted (Roberts, 2001). Consequently, this study also seeks to uncover how the teaching of pragmatics in the chosen context is understood and put to use locally.

In order to understand and explore the research problem, that is, the teaching and learning of English language use in contexts where other culturally-embedded pragmatic considerations operate and the implications for teaching and learning English, the following specific questions are explored:

1. How is language in use, that is, pragmatics presented in global ELT coursebooks?
2. How do teachers in the EFL context of Thai ELT classrooms represent and interpret global ELT coursebook materials to teach the pragmatic features of English?
3. How do students perceive and interpret the pragmatic features of English both in and beyond the classroom in the Thai EFL context?

1.6 PERSONAL BACKGROUND

In undertaking this research, it is important to disclose my own subjectivity as researcher in relation to the object of my study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Here I share my own experiences of pragmatics and intercultural interactions and begin to acknowledge the beliefs and assumptions that inform my researcher position. My interest in pragmatics developed through several personal experiences. First, my experiences travelling in diverse cultural settings have allowed me to explore ways of talking and interacting in my own language and other languages. These experiences have demonstrated the importance of negotiating meaning in interaction and the potential for miscommunication when the tools for negotiation are limited. This was further emphasised through my experience of living in Thailand and learning to speak Thai. I used Thai to function in day-to-day transactions, to develop friendships and to learn more about Thailand. For me, the process of learning Thai involved not only learning a language, but also culture and
how it manifested in interactions. I found myself wanting to understand the layers of meaning in different ways of interacting and talking, and how I could express what I wanted to say effectively and appropriately for the purposes of ensuring social harmony and communicative effectiveness. The textbooks I used to learn Thai were primarily focused on grammar and vocabulary with little insight into what might constitute pragmatically appropriate interactions.

My interest in pragmatics also developed from my experiences of teaching English in Thailand. From 2004 to 2010, I taught English as a foreign language to adults in language schools in Thailand. One of my main concerns in teaching English was for my classes to relate to students’ intended English language use outside the classroom. My classes consisted of a range of students with a variety of purposes for learning English. One of the biggest challenges in teaching was how to make the classes relevant to each student given this diversity. The classes I taught were constrained by the designated coursebook along with the administration’s and students’ perceived expectations of what English language teaching should look like. The focus of the coursebooks tended more toward grammatical form: where the books focused on the use of English, it was more applicable to tourist or study abroad contexts, for example, asking for directions or talking about travel experiences. Speaking involves employing a range of pragmatic strategies, yet these were only explored to a limited degree in the coursebooks we used. In addition, while the aim of the courses I taught was to develop learners’ four language macroskills, there was little emphasis on their practical application outside the classroom. In my experience, most students appeared to be using or intending to use English as a lingua franca or English as a language of instruction at school, university or work. However, the content of the courses we taught was kept general in order to cater to diversity of interests and needs and this seemed to minimise its relevance to learners’ English language use beyond the classroom.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study employed an instrumental case study design (Creswell, 2012; Stake, 1995, 2003) investigating an English class for adults at Bangkok English language school, BELS, in Thailand. This study is instrumental as it endeavours to provide insight into a particular issue beyond the case itself (Stake, 1995) with the issue being the prevalent use of ELF and the teaching and learning of pragmatics in EFL
classrooms. A critical theoretical perspective informed the design. While traditional ethnographic case study aims to investigate “what is”, a critical approach to case study assumes that “the conditions for existence within a particular context are not as they could be for specific subjects” (Madison, 2011, p. 5, italics in original). The interpretations of the analysis draw on theoretical explanations to posit what also might or could be within agendas of social change and building informed awareness (Fairclough, 2003). Qualitative data were generated via course materials and curricula, interviews with teachers and students, video-recordings of classes, field notes and a research diary. A method of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was used drawing on the linguistically-oriented model by Fairclough (2003) and the pragmatic typologies developed by Verschueren (1999, 2009). The analytical method enabled analysis and interpretation of textual data in the light of understandings about what and how pragmatically appropriate interactions occur. The findings aim to inform an understanding of the role of pragmatics in EFL classrooms. The study also aims to provide insights into the perspectives of language learners regarding the teaching of pragmatics including its relationship to their English language needs outside the classroom. Chapter Four discusses the research methodology in more detail.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Given the expanding use of English throughout the world, pragmatics and appropriate face-to-face interactions in English make English language teaching highly relevant and significant. The acute question facing English language teaching in EFL contexts such as Thailand is how English language interactions should be taught. It raises questions about culture, talk, and teaching. This study investigates this relationship and contributes to understandings of how English language pragmatics can be taught in contexts of expanding English language use. It is intended that this thesis will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of pragmatics in English language teaching and learning, especially in the Thai context. Exploring the notion of pragmatics in English language classrooms seeks to expand our understanding of the skills and knowledge needed to engage in successful intercultural communication going beyond the grammar and vocabulary of a language. Specifically, the findings from this study aim to:

- add to teachers’ understandings of the role of pragmatics in interaction;
• inform pedagogy for the teaching of pragmatics;
• inform coursebook and materials development;
• promote language awareness;
• contribute to the alignment of English language education with actual language use in the Thai EFL context; and
• contribute to the professional debates and discussions about English language teaching and English as a lingua franca.

1.9 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis has nine chapters. This chapter has introduced the study, discussing its background, context and significance. Chapter Two reviews theoretical and empirical literature on English language teaching with particular interest in the areas of English as a lingua franca and pragmatics. Chapter Three outlines the theoretical framework which underpins the study. It incorporates a theoretical perspective of pragmatics which draws on the work of Verschueren (1999, 2009) and Mey (2001). The critical stance adopted in this study drawing on the theory of critical discourse analysis is also explained. In Chapter Four I discuss the research design – the methodology, data generation methods, my framework for critical discourse analysis, and ethical considerations and limitations.

Chapter Five lays out the study. It includes descriptions of the coursebook, classes, and participants, and accounts of the data generation. It also presents the logic of the data chapters that follow. The three data chapters are organised around the three foundational generation points of the data – the coursebook and associated materials (Chapter Six), the teachers (Chapter Seven), and the students (Chapter Eight). Chapter Six focuses on the coursebook’s representations of contextual English language use, that is, pragmatics. Chapter Seven examines how the teachers interpret and recontextualise the coursebook materials to teach the pragmatic features of English. Chapter Eight centres on the students’ interpretations and perceptions of English language in use both in and beyond the classroom in the Thai EFL context. Finally, Chapter Nine summarises the research project and my findings, and identifies the contributions made to the field of English language teaching (ELT) including coursebook design and ELT pedagogy. It draws together the findings on
the teaching and learning of pragmatics in relation to students in the Thai EFL context and makes recommendations for coursebook design, teacher education and practice, and future research.
Chapter 2: Researching English Language Teaching

This chapter critically reviews literature reporting theory and empirical studies in English language teaching with particular interest in the areas of English as a lingua franca, culture and pragmatics. The chapter begins with a discussion of English language teaching in the context of globalisation (Section 2.1). This is followed by a consideration of the dominance of the communicative approach in English language teaching in Section 2.2. The implications of English as a lingua franca for English language teaching are then explored (Section 2.3). Section 2.4 discusses language and culture and its relevance to English language teaching in light of the global spread of English.

Section 2.5 follows, reviewing the literature pertinent to pragmatics and language learning, namely cross-cultural pragmatics (Section 2.5.1) and interlanguage pragmatics (Section 2.5.2). The role of pragmatics in English language teaching is then discussed, including English language teacher education and global English coursebooks (Section 2.5.3) and more specifically within the expanding circle (Section 2.5.4). The chapter ends with a summary and a discussion of the implications arising from the research (Section 2.6).

2.1 ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALISATION

Despite the pluralistic realities of English language use with much of English language interaction taking place independent of ‘native speakers’, in English language teaching (ELT), the ‘native speaker’ normative model remains dominant (Dewey, 2007). Consequently, English language use in the expanding circle is viewed as deficient with variations from ‘native speaker’ norms referred to as errors or fossilization (Seidlhofer, 2009). As Dewey (2007, p. 345) asserts, “within the framework of ELT institutions, non-native speakers are still regarded as the ‘other’, marginalised and in some senses dispossessed”. Pegrum’s (2004) discourse analysis of English language teaching advertising in ELT professional publications from the United Kingdom and the United States found that English is positioned as an asset
that is owned by its native speakers who are then able to promote and sell it. It is seen to be a natural accompaniment to globalisation, modernisation and a cosmopolitan lifestyle necessitating respect for individualism, open debate and global involvement (Pegrum, 2004). Pegrum (2004) analysed advertisements which targeted teachers, agents, and students, or a combination of these. Similar themes were found across the advertising irrespective of the target demographics.

Block (2010) concurs, arguing that in the context of globalisation English has become a commodity with the English language teaching industry branding consumers of English as cosmopolitan global citizens. Consequently, the use-value of English has been replaced by its exchange-value as exemplified in the content and branding of English language coursebooks (Block, 2010). This is in line with Gray (2010) who sees English language coursebooks as complex, constructed cultural artefacts which aim to make meaning in particular ways. Specifically, Gray (2010) argues that the way in which text and images are constructed in English coursebooks positions English as a promotional commodity. Furthermore, the content in English coursebooks is not always relevant or useful to the teachers and students who use them (Gray, 2000, 2010; Masuhara & Tomlinson, 2008). These observations are particularly important given that the English language coursebook serves as the curriculum for many English language classrooms and may be the only source of language input and practice for learners from contexts where English is a foreign language (Akbari, 2008; J. Richards, 2006; Vellenga, 2004). Given this and the increasing use of English in intercultural communication, a more critical awareness of the relationship between language and culture and how this operates in current English language teaching materials and teaching approaches is needed.

As Masuhara and Tomlinson (2008) assert, global English coursebooks appear to be trying to cater to two different contexts simultaneously - General English courses in countries where English is the first language, and English courses in countries where English is a foreign language and used as a lingua franca. With the same coursebook required to fulfil dual roles, context is downplayed and the users’ needs and wants are left unmet (Masuhara & Tomlinson, 2008). However, as previously discussed, the language user and their ability to negotiate meaning in a variety of contexts are critical in countries where English is used as a lingua franca.
(House, 2003, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011). It follows that an understanding of pragmatics in English language coursebooks is particularly relevant to these contexts.

Despite the ascendant use of English as a lingua franca in multiple contexts, English continues to be taught and viewed as a foreign language drawing on ‘native speaker’ norms from inner circle contexts and resulting in a preference for ‘native speaker’ teachers and coursebooks from the United States or the United Kingdom (Jenkins et al., 2011). As a result, English language schools in expanding circle countries such as Thailand import global English language coursebooks and ‘native speaker’ teachers to make themselves more marketable to students (Dat, 2008; Masuhara & Tomlinson, 2008).

The diversifying of contexts, users, and uses of English(es) appear to be in contradiction with the continued monolithic presentations of ‘English’ in teaching materials and coursebooks. Contrary to concerns of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992) in which a particular variety of English is seen to be promoted over another, English may be appropriated locally and used to negotiate meaning in socially and contextually appropriate ways (Canagarajah, 1999). However, whether English language teaching is contributing to discourses of ‘native speaker’ privilege, ‘authenticity’ and superiority, and therefore restricting the communicative choices of language learners remains a critical consideration. Therefore, it is important to investigate what is happening in an EFL context such as Thailand. It is anticipated that the findings from this study will have important implications for English language teaching and future practice in this and other EFL contexts.

2.2 ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND THE DOMINANCE OF THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

The field of English language teaching has seen several approaches from grammar translation to audio-lingualism to the now dominant methodology of communicative language teaching (CLT). This section will explore the dominance of the communicative approach, introducing the underpinning construct of communicative competence and discussing the role of communicative language teaching in practice.
CLT is frequently seen as an approach to language teaching that developed in response to the emphasis by other methodologies on grammatical forms which were often presented out of their context of use. In 1991, Savignon defined CLT as a term for methods and curricula that embrace both the goals and the processes of classroom learning, for teaching practice that views competence in terms of social interaction and looks to further language acquisition research to account for its development. (p. 263, italics in original)

The emphasis on ‘competence in social interaction’ highlights the formative role of Hymes’ (1972) notion of communicative competence in CLT. Indeed, Savignon (2007, p. 209) describes the heart of CLT as “the engagement of learners in communication in order to allow them to develop their communicative competence”. One popular and widely-used method in CLT is the direct method, which involves exclusive use of the target language and no use of the learner’s first language. With its emphasis on communication in the target language, the direct method is implicated as a method which enables NS teachers to teach in contexts where they do not need to speak the local language.

2.2.1 Communicative competence

Broadly, communicative competence refers to the ability to use language effectively in interaction (Savignon, 2007). It was first introduced by Hymes (1972) in response to Chomsky’s (1957) then dominant perspective on language which focused exclusively on linguistic competence. Hymes (1972) argued that knowing a language required more than knowledge of grammatical forms and that knowledge of how to put those forms to use according to the particular context was also crucial. Communicative competence is a term now widely used in the literature of applied linguistics research and foreign or second language teaching. Accordingly, various models of communicative competence have been proposed (Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia, 2007). Central to these models, while labelled in different ways, are the competencies considered necessary to communicate successfully in another language, including knowledge of lexis, syntax, rules of morphology, and phonology (grammatical or linguistic competence); competence in rules of use (pragmatic or sociolinguistic competence); mastery of communication strategies (strategic competence); and the ability to combine grammatical forms and meanings to produce
unified spoken or written texts (discourse competence) (Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia, 2007).

More recently, the notion of communicative competence has been criticised, particularly in relation to English language teaching and learning, as furthering adherence to ‘native speaker’ norms rather than reflecting the diversity of global English language use (Alptekin, 2002; Kramsch, 2006; Leung, 2005). Findings from research into the use of World Englishes, that is institutionalised second-language varieties of English (Kachru, 1992; McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008), and ELF, challenge the predominant reliance on idealised monolithic social rules in English language teaching (Leung, 2005). As Berns (1990, p31) contends,

if the context determines a person’s communicative competence, and if there is more than one setting in which appropriateness in using a language can be shaped, the concept of communicative competence cannot be considered in monolithic terms.

Leung (2005) advocates for a more critically aware ethnographic approach to the notion of communicative competence and communicative language teaching, informed by a reflexive understanding of one’s own cultural assumptions and beliefs as well as a greater sensitivity to the increasingly diverse uses of English.

2.2.2 Communicative language teaching in practice

Since CLT was introduced, as with communicative competence, there have been various understandings and realisations of this approach in classroom practice. Howatt (1984) usefully distinguishes between weak and strong versions of CLT. The weak version is based on the belief that the various aspects of communicative competence can be clearly identified and then systematically taught. In this version, discrete models of language use are presented to students, and then a ‘communicative’ activity is used to practise what has been modelled. These activities often involve group work or pair work resulting in a focus on communication in the classroom. In contrast, a strong version of CLT maintains that language is acquired through learning how language works. The strong version of CLT therefore entails providing learners with opportunities to experience how language is constructed and operates in communication. This distinction was taken up by Holliday (1994) who argued that, while weak and strong versions may be interconnected in English language courses, the weak version often predominates in commercial English
language schools where small classes and motivated students tend to be the norm. The commercialisation of English language teaching has furthered the popularity of the weak version of CLT and there has been a tendency for expanding circle contexts to adopt this approach irrespective of its appropriacy for the particular context.

Indeed, one of the most prominent concerns with communicative language teaching is that it is considered to be inappropriate in many teaching contexts, particularly where English is taught as a foreign language (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996; McKay, 2003a; McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008; Nunan, 2003). For example, in a multiple case-study of countries in the Asia-Pacific region, through policy document analysis and guided interviews, Nunan (2003) found that while the use of CLT was a goal of several countries, CLT has met with a number of constraints in terms of its implementation. These constraints include large class sizes, expectations of the role of teachers, and exposure to English by teachers and students. These findings are in line with concerns raised in the previous chapter (see Sections 1.3.2 and 1.3.3) about English language teaching in Thailand (Khamkhien, 2010; Wongsothorn et al., 2002).

Furthermore, CLT may not be commensurate with the local culture of learning. For example, Kramsch and Sullivan (1996) in observing an English class in Vietnam found that the local culture of learning which emphasised classroom as family and teacher as mentor affected how the CLT-based English language coursebook was utilised resulting in group work activities becoming whole class work. A characteristic of the weak version of CLT is the reduction of ‘communicative’ to mean a focus on speaking in the classroom and therefore an expectation of group or pair work. However, as Kramsch and Sullivan’s (1996) research shows, group and pair work may not be appropriate in certain contexts where other characteristics inform the culture of learning.

An additional concern with communicative language teaching has been the number of interpretations and consequent misunderstandings to which the approach has given rise. Spada (2007) has summarised these as CLT equating to: an exclusive emphasis on meaning resulting in no focus on grammatical form; an absence of explicit feedback on errors; a learner-centred approach to teaching; an emphasis on speaking and listening activities; and avoidance of using the learners’ first language in the classroom. However, classroom research in second language learning has
called into question these assumptions. For example, research findings support the benefits of a balance of form and meaning in second language classrooms (e.g. Norris & Ortega, 2000), and studies have also shown that a learner’s first language can have a positive influence on learning a second language (e.g. Swain & Lapkin, 2002). Spada (2007) advocates a more balanced approach and emphasizes the importance of drawing on empirical classroom research to inform CLT practice.

Although there have been several concerns with the implementation of CLT in various contexts, it continues to be the dominant approach in English language teaching. Similar to ‘native speaker’ norms of English language use, inner circle models of English language teaching appear to predominate in English language classrooms in expanding circle contexts. The challenges that have been highlighted underscore the importance of considering the local context in considering appropriate pedagogy. Furthermore, given the global use of English and the diversifying needs of learners, an understanding of how English is utilised by students in the local context is a necessary component in informing English language teaching. The influence of English as a lingua franca in particular will be discussed in the following section.

2.3 ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA

In this section I will explain how the concept of English as a lingua franca has appeared and become evident in the literature on English language teaching. As discussed in Chapter One (see Section 1.2.1), English is now widely considered the language of international communication. Given that the predominant use of English is between speakers whose first language is a language other than English, English in its international use is perhaps best understood as a lingua franca (Jenkins et al., 2011). Thus, English as a lingua franca (ELF), sometimes referred to as English as an International language (EIL), has emerged as a key field of linguistic research with important implications for English language teaching and learning, particularly in relation to pragmatics.

Over the last decade, a substantial amount of empirical research has been undertaken in the field of English as a lingua franca with the aim of describing its linguistic features and the underlying processes shaping its use (Jenkins et al., 2011; Seidlhofer, 2004). Descriptive work has focused on the phonology, lexis, syntax and pragmatics of ELF (e.g. Cogo & Dewey, 2006; House, 2010; Jenkins, 2000).
Jenkins’ (2000) influential study of ELF pronunciation, in which she analysed interactions between non-native speakers of English, identified phonological features that improved mutual intelligibility in ELF interactions that in many cases diverged from ‘standard’ English pronunciation. Another finding from this study was the importance of accommodation strategies in adapting pronunciation in order to be more intelligible in interactions (Jenkins, 2000). The lexico-grammatical features of ELF have been documented in several corpora, most notably the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE), but also the corpus of English as a lingua franca in Academic Settings (ELFA) and the Asian Corpus of English (ACE) (Jenkins et al., 2011; Seidlhofer, 2004). Studies investigating ELF pragmatics have tended to focus on miscommunication and resolution of non-understanding (Cogo & Dewey, 2006; House, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011; Kaur, 2009, 2010). Findings suggest that ELF users exhibit a high degree of strategic competence in negotiating meaning in interactions (House, 2010). Furthermore, a high degree of pragmatic innovation is employed with idiomatic expressions and discourse markers being utilised in new ways in ELF talk (House, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011). As mentioned in the previous chapter (see Section 1.2.2), what has become most evident in researching ELF is ELF’s inherent variability (Jenkins et al., 2011; Seidlhofer, 2009). Accordingly, there has been a shift in focus from research into isolated linguistic features toward an exploration of the processes involved in the linguistic choices made in the use of ELF.

Interaction in ELF is complex. As Meierkord (2004, p. 112) observes, “ELF may involve the direct or indirect interplay of three or even more linguistic systems”, including the norms of the participants’ different linguistic backgrounds, as well as those they’ve acquired in learning English. Understanding among ELF users is therefore crucial to successful ELF interactions (Murata & Jenkins, 2009). Smith and Nelson (2008) identify three dimensions of understanding. The first is intelligibility which refers to the ability to recognise another’s word or utterance. The second, comprehensibility, refers to the ability to determine meaning from a word or utterance spoken by another. The third dimension is interpretability and refers to the ability to understand the intent of another’s word or utterance. This framework underscores the importance of developing an awareness of all variable aspects of
language from phonology to structure to pragmatics in order to increase the possibility of understanding in ELF interactions (Smith, 2009).

Findings from ELF research have inevitable implications for English language teaching in contexts where ELF use predominates. Jenkins, et al (2011) highlight the importance of raising awareness of the inherent variability of language in interaction both in English language teacher education and the English language classroom. The viability of imposing external norms and the continued favouring of ‘native speaker’ normative models are called into question (Jenkins, 2006a). Concerns have been raised that ELF may then be imposed as a normative model for teaching (Ferguson, 2009). However, it is not proposed that linguistic features of ELF will form the basis of English language curricula in ELF contexts (Jenkins et al., 2011). Rather it is suggested that there is a reprioritisation of the pedagogic content of English language lessons, shifting the emphasis from form and particular language norms toward practices and strategies for effective communication. However, the biggest challenge here may be students’ and teachers’ beliefs about learning English. As Ferguson (2009, p. 131) asserts,

The greatest obstacle probably is attitudes, and in particular the historically ingrained assumption that native-like proficiency and conformity to L1 standard norms is the most secure benchmark of achievement in second language learning.

Park and Wee (2011, p. 371) suggest approaching ELF from a practice-based perspective in which the aim of English language teaching would be to encourage “cross-cultural meta-communicative awareness and sensitivity”. The underlying assumption and advantage of this approach is that the responsibility of being more cross-culturally aware and accommodating in communication does not rest solely with the ‘non-native’ English language learner, but with both native and non-native speakers of English. With respect to teaching pragmatics, rather than modelling the norms and conventions of a native speaker, Murray (2012) proposes the teaching and use of three complementary strategy types: empirically-based strategies informed by ELF research as well as inductive and deductive strategies to raise learners’ awareness of their own and others’ language use. The aim here is that learners reflect on the underlying dimensions of communication and become aware of the variability of English language use in terms of expressing and interpreting meaning.
2.4 ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND CULTURE

Where beliefs about English language learning and teaching may point to a preference for ‘native speaker’ norms, the use of English in contexts where it is predominantly used between speakers of different first languages and cultures is fraught with cultural complexity. Thus, notions of language and culture, and how they relate to each other, are pivotal to this study. This section will begin by providing an overview of key theories of the language-culture relationship emphasising those which are relevant to ELF communication and second language learning and use. It will be suggested that both cognitive and social perspectives of the language-culture relationship are important in understanding English language use, particularly in English as a lingua franca contexts. Following this, the role of culture in English language teaching will be discussed.
2.4.1 Language and culture – beyond an essentialist understanding

A key definition of culture for this study is that

Culture is the sum total of the information, beliefs, values and skills one needs to share and apply in the society and situations in which the individual lives: what I need to know in order to ‘make sense’ in and of those situations in the same ways as my fellows and to communicate and behave in ways they find appropriate. The communicative practices through which culture is transmitted are themselves part of culture. (Riley, 2007, p. 40)

Ways of talking and interacting with associated identities then are at the core of the perspective on culture adopted in this study. As Risager (2007) argues, every communicative event has a cultural context, and every context conveys meaning.

Language has been viewed as the principle semiotic instrument for both representing and creating culture (Geertz, 1973; Halliday, 1979). As Halliday (1979) asserts, we learn how to construct and interpret meaning through language. From a semiotic viewpoint, “culture is public because meaning is” (Geertz, 1973, p. 12). This is in contrast to cognitive perspectives of culture in which culture is conceptualised as internal and private (Strauss & Quinn, 1997). Cognitive theories describe culture as inner mental organisations, or schemata, for understanding the world and deciding how to act within it. Cognitive perspectives have been criticised for foregrounding the psychological dimensions of culture and minimising the role of social interaction in creating meaning (Geertz, 1973). Similarly, semiotic perspectives have been criticised for ignoring the psychological aspects of culture (Strauss & Quinn, 1997). While cognitive and semiotic perspectives of culture differ in the way they conceptualise the nature of meaning in culture, both the internal mental notions and elements of culture and the external social-interactive aspects of culture are relevant to understanding intercultural communication, and therefore the use of English in lingua franca contexts. Cognitive perspectives highlight the role of shared schemata and figurative language in creating meaning and the extent to which these cultural schemata might be mutually understood or enacted in intercultural communication. Semiotic viewpoints emphasise the role of language in the language/culture relationship drawing attention to meaning, context and interaction.

Earlier theories of language and culture have come under criticism for positioning cultures and languages as fixed homogeneous entities (Risager, 2007).
More recent critical conceptualisations of the language-culture relationship have hybridity and fluidity as central components. Risager (2007) contends that communicative events occur in a language-culture nexus – “a local integration of linguistic, languacultural, discursive and other cultural flows in more or less differing social networks” (p. 183). Similarly, Pennycook (2007) views the relationship between language and culture as continuously changing, reflecting and informing new identities. The relationship between second language use and culture has been characterised as occurring in a ‘third place’, where neither the first language/culture nor the target language/culture fully operate, allowing for new conceptualisations of language and culture to emerge (Kramsch, 1993). In a more recent conceptualisation of this notion, Kramsch (2011, p. 355) suggests that second language use be understood more as a “symbolic PROCESS of meaning-making that sees beyond the dualities of national languages (L1-L2) and national cultures (C1-C2)”, and less of a PLACE. In line with these understandings, Baker’s (2009) research into intercultural ELF communication in Thailand found that “many of the participants viewed cultures as mixed, hybrid, and open, and saw the need to adapt, interpret and mediate between different cultures” (p. 585). He highlights the importance of a critical dynamic and non-essentialist understanding of culture in relation to ELF in which culture is viewed as negotiated and emerging within communication (Baker, 2009).

2.4.2 Implications for English language teaching

Given the interconnectedness of language and culture, it follows that culture is highly relevant in language learning classrooms, especially in English language classrooms, prevalent across many different settings throughout the world. There is no single culture of English. However, like any language, English is not culturally neutral. Meaning is created, conveyed and interpreted through English and its use. Culture is expressed and interpreted explicitly and implicitly in the English language classroom through course materials and content, as well as through the interactions between students, and the teacher and students.

How we view and draw on culture is always ideological (Baker, 2011b; Holliday, 2010). It is therefore important to be aware of the cultural assumptions that underlie dominant beliefs about English and English language teaching and their power in shaping what and how English is taught. Dominant methodologies and concepts in English language teaching, including the ‘native speaker’ model,
communicative language teaching, learner-centredness, and autonomy, have been criticised for creating culturalist ideas of ‘us’ and ‘them’ leading to, in extreme cases, a culture of linguistic imperialism in the profession (Holliday, 2005). Holliday (2009) points out that while English language use occurs beyond a fixed nation-culture-language framework, this essentialist perspective is still apparent in English language education with English-speaking countries and cultures as the dominant models in English language classrooms. ‘Native speaker’ cultural assumptions, belief systems and norms of communicative competence are inappropriate in ELF contexts where English is not seen as owned by a particular culture or speech community (Baker, 2009; Holliday, 2009; House, 2003; Jenkins et al., 2011). Accordingly, a more culturally diverse and informed understanding of the contexts in which English is being used by learners is needed by those who teach English in lingua franca contexts (McKay, 2003b).

2.5 ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND PRAGMATICS

Pragmatics sees language as cultural practice and, as such, it is particularly relevant to intercultural communication and language learning classrooms. In terms of English language teaching, two areas of pragmatics are salient – cross-cultural pragmatics and interlanguage pragmatics. This section will review research in these fields and discuss their influence on English language teaching. It will begin with an examination of cross-cultural pragmatics research, highlighting dominant methodologies and underlying ideologies (Section 2.5.1). This will be followed, in Section 2.5.2, by a review of interlanguage pragmatics research including an exploration of pragmatic competence. The impact of these areas of research on English language teaching, including English language teacher education and global English coursebooks, will then be presented in Section 2.5.3. The section will end with a discussion of English use and pragmatics teaching in the expanding circle (Section 2.5.4).

2.5.1 Cross-cultural pragmatics

Cross-cultural pragmatics, or contrastive pragmatics, is the study of contextual language use by language users from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (LoCastro, 2012). This field of research has shown that, while not homogeneous, there are pragmatic differences across cultures. In addition, studies of pragmatic
transfer show that learners apply pragmatic knowledge from their first language to their second language which can lead to breakdowns in communication (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Yates, 2010). Pragmatic errors, in contrast to grammatical errors, may not be understood as such (Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004). Instead, the speaker may be perceived as rude or offensive. As such, research into cross-cultural pragmatics is highly relevant to language learning.

Cross-cultural pragmatics research has focused largely on speech acts, that is functions realised through language that follow a predictable routine (Austin, 1975; Searle, 1976). While the universality of speech act theory has been questioned (Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2004; Wierzbicka, 2010), studies in cross-cultural pragmatics have highlighted that there are differences in the way speech functions are performed in different languages and cultures. For example, it has been found that English-speakers are more inclined to use indirect forms of request than speakers of a number of other languages (e.g. Fukushima, 1996; Y.-H. Lin, 2009). In addition, there can be cross-cultural differences in the way refusals are expressed. In researching refusals, Wannaruk (2008) found that speakers of Thai expressed gratitude less often than American speakers of English when refusing invitations or offers. Similarly, research into apologies indicates that perceptions of an offence’s significance, as well as the meaning and role of an apology, may differ across cultures (Bergman & Kasper, 1993; Trosborg, 1995).

Although the studies reviewed above are not intended to provide socially predetermined rules regarding contextual language use, they highlight that pragmatic differences across cultures do exist. Language behaviour is by no means homogeneous within particular sociocultural contexts, yet speakers from the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds share knowledge of the various linguistic choices available to them in a given situation as determined by their analysis of the social variables that are operating in the situation (Yates, 2010). Many times, this knowledge is not conscious and linguacultural similarities across various contexts are assumed. Language learners can therefore benefit from drawing attention to the possible ways of interpreting and producing meaning in different cultures and contexts (Yates, 2010). It follows that a significant amount of research into whether and how pragmatics can be taught and learned in foreign language contexts has been undertaken. This field is broadly known as interlanguage pragmatics.
2.5.2 Interlanguage pragmatics

The investigation of pragmatics in second or foreign language contexts, also referred to as interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), is a burgeoning area of interest in applied linguistics as evidenced by the growing number of reviews and book-length collections of empirical research in the field (Alcón Soler & Martínez-Flor, 2008b; Bardovi-Harlig, Félix-Brasdefer, & Omar, 2006; Barron, 2012; Ishihara, 2010; Kasper & Roever, 2005; Rose, 2005; Rose & Kasper, 2001; Taguchi, 2009, 2011; Trosborg, 2010). ILP studies, in line with cross-cultural pragmatics research, have concentrated primarily on the study of various individual speech acts. Examples of speech acts that have been investigated include requests (e.g. Alcón Soler, 2002, 2008; Dastjerdi & Rezvani, 2010; Fukuya & Hill, 2006; Takahashi, 2010; Takimoto, 2006, 2007; Tateyama, 2009), refusals (e.g. Alcón Soler & Pitarch, 2010; Allami & Naeimi, 2011; Bacelar Da Silva, 2003; Felix-Brasdefer, 2008), suggestions (e.g. Koike & Pearson, 2005; Martínez-Flor & Alcón Soler, 2007; Martínez-Flor & Fukuya, 2005, 2008), complaints (e.g. Chen, 2009), and apologies (e.g. Trosborg, 1995). In addition to research into speech acts, there has also been some investigation into routine formulae (e.g. Bardovi-Harlig, 2009; Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan, & Reynolds, 1991; House, 1996), conversation structure (e.g. Wong, 2002), and conversational implicature (e.g. Taguchi, 2005). ILP research has, for the most part, focused on the operationalisation and development of pragmatic competence, a term which appears to have eluded attempts to capture its complexity and warrants further discussion.

Pragmatic competence has been conceptualised as pragmatic knowledge and strategies in language learning. The notion of pragmatic competence developed within theoretical models of second language communicative competence (Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia, 2007; LoCastro, 2012) which were based on Hymes’ (1972) concept of communicative competence (see Section 2.2.1). These models position pragmatic competence as a crucial component of second language proficiency.

The influential model of Canale and Swain (1980), further modified by Canale (1983), consists of four components of communicative competence – grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. While grammatical competence refers to mastery of lexis, syntax, and
phonology, sociolinguistic competence denotes knowledge of choices of language in use. Discourse competence represents knowledge of cohesion and coherence in written and spoken texts, and the ability to employ compensatory strategies to ensure effective communication is referred to as strategic competence. It is the knowledge required for sociolinguistic competence that is most closely aligned to what is understood as pragmatics.

Although pragmatic competence could be understood as sociolinguistic competence in the Canale and Swain’s (1980) model, pragmatic competence is more clearly defined in Bachman’s (1990) model of communicative competence. Bachman’s (1990) model has three main components – language competence, strategic competence, and physiological mechanisms. Pragmatic competence is considered part of language competence along with organisational competence. While organisational competence includes grammatical competence and textual competence, pragmatic competence is further delineated into illocutionary competence, or functional knowledge, and sociolinguistic competence. Illocutionary competence is regarded as knowledge of both speech acts and language functions, whereas sociolinguistic knowledge refers to knowledge of the contextual appropriateness of speech acts and language functions as realised.

Bachman’s (1990) separation of pragmatic competence into linguistic and social components mirrors the separation of pragmatics into pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic components. First introduced by Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983), the term pragmalinguistics refers to the language required to carry out speech acts and negotiate meaning, while sociopragmatics refers to the social and contextual awareness which informs how speech acts are understood and performed (Alcón Soler & Martínez-Flor, 2008a). While this may not have been the intent, the way pragmatic competence has been conceptualised and operationalised in applied linguistics research indicates a preference toward a component view of pragmatics in which knowledge of discrete speech acts and other pragmatic markers along with a set of social rules are all that are required in order to develop pragmatic competence in an additional language. The full complexity of contextualised language use is unexplored.

ILP studies have been predominantly based on a separation of pragmatics into pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic components. Mirroring the divide in second
language acquisition research between cognitive and social approaches and the bias toward the former (Firth & Wagner, 1997, 2007), ILP research has been mainly cognitive in orientation foregrounding pragmalinguistics over sociopragmatics (Alcón & Jorda, 2008; Alcón Soler & Martínez-Flor, 2008a). However, as Roever (2011, p. 464) asserts,

Both are tightly connected, as a speaker’s sociopragmatic analysis of a situation (in terms of politeness, possible meanings, and cultural norms and prohibitions) is linguistically encoded through pragmalinguistic choices.

That is, both the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic elements of pragmatics are inextricably linked. The selection of pragmatic forms presupposes an awareness of the context and social relationships of a given situation. For this reason, attention to both the pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic components of communicative events appears to be crucial to learners’ development of pragmatic awareness. This is supported by classroom intervention studies which demonstrate that pragmatics instruction drawing attention to both social and linguistic elements can lead to improved pragmatic awareness (Alcón Soler, 2005; Takahashi, 2001, 2005; Takimoto, 2008). In particular, an awareness of the connection between these two components may lead to (or require) deeper processing of the target forms and therefore aid acquisition (Takimoto, 2008).

While there has been research indicating that pragmatics can be taught and learned, investigations into the effects of different instructional approaches to the teaching of pragmatics have yet to achieve conclusive results (Alcón Soler & Martínez-Flor, 2008a; Barron, 2012; Jeon & Kaya, 2006; Takimoto, 2008). In many cases, explicit instruction appears to be more effective than implicit instruction in the development of learners’ pragmatic competence, though some forms of implicit instruction, such as input enhancement, have also been found to be successful (Alcón Soler & Martínez-Flor, 2008a; Ishihara, 2010; Jeon & Kaya, 2006; Taguchi, 2011; Takimoto, 2008).

Ishihara (2010, p. 939) attributes the inconclusive results of instructional intervention studies, in part, to the complexity of various external factors, including
learners’ proficiency, learning styles, motivation and attitudes, cognitive level, the extent of exposure to the target language and culture, and other individual differences such as age, gender, and personality; the frequency, salience, and level of complexity of the target structure.

Yet, according to Verschueren’s (1999) pragmatic perspective, it is the complexity of these kinds of contextual variables that informs and influences linguistic choices and is at the heart of pragmatics. Analysis as to why there are inconsistent findings in pragmatics instruction studies tends to be focused firmly on the cognitive processing elements and the variables that may impact them as though they are discrete. Yet, the inconsistent results could also be attributed to the aforementioned tendency to focus on pragmalinguistics without giving sufficient, if any, attention to sociopragmatics.

A further consideration is that of learner subjectivity in the adoption of pragmatic norms (Dewaele, 2008; Ishihara & Tarone, 2009). In order to understand learners’ pragmatic development in foreign or second language contexts beyond their ability to recognise or perform specific speech acts, it is important to develop an understanding of the learners’ point of view of pragmatics and pragmatic competence (Dewaele, 2007). With this in mind, Dewaele (2008) investigated adult learners’ perspectives on appropriateness and foreign language acquisition. Appropriateness is defined here as the ability to determine how and what to say to a particular person in a specific context (Dewaele, 2008). Consistent with how Roever (2011) conceptualises the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic elements of pragmatic competence, Dewaele (2008) emphasises the interactive nature of linguistic and sociocultural elements in judging appropriateness.

A web-based Bilingualism and Emotion questionnaire was used to investigate participants’ awareness of and attitudes toward appropriateness in their additional language(s). The responses of 1,579 multilinguals between 18 and 73 years of age were collected. Selected responses from the questionnaire show participants’ diverse knowledge of and varied attitudes toward appropriate use of their additional language(s). The participants’ reflections show metapragmatic awareness of differences between their first language and the L2, and that they may or may not choose to act on those. Dewaele (2008) argues that appropriateness should be taught as sociolinguistic and sociopragmatic competence as important aspects of
communicative competence and learners can be better equipped to be L2 users should they choose to act upon the pragmatic knowledge they have developed.

Still, the overwhelming focus of interlanguage pragmatics research on individual pragmatic features, such as speech acts and routine formulae, has reinforced a component view of pragmatics in which contextual language use is seemingly reduced to the acquisition of separate pragmalinguistic targets (Taguchi, 2011). Furthermore, underlying the concept of interlanguage pragmatics is the assumption that learners of an additional language are in the process of acquiring the pragmatics of the target language rather than deploying strategies to facilitate the negotiation of meaning according the context in which they find themselves. Only if users achieve ‘native-like’ competence of the target language can they be considered correct. In this view, ELF users are seen as interlanguage speakers. However, as noted in Section 2.3, research into pragmatics and ELF have found that ELF users utilise a high degree of strategic competence and pragmatic innovation in negotiating meaning in interactions (House, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011).

The challenge for ILP researchers is to operationalise pragmatic competence in such a way that it reflects the highly contextualised, dynamic, and negotiated nature of pragmatic interaction. In addition, a more comprehensive understanding of the broader social context in which the teaching and learning of pragmatics takes place could provide valuable information about the effects of pragmatics instruction. This appears to be an under-researched area and it is intended that findings from the present study will contribute to new understandings in teaching and learning pragmatics.

2.5.3 Pragmatics and English language teaching: obstacles to practice

Pragmatic competence, while conceptualised in various ways, is considered an important aspect of communicative competence. However, pragmatics instruction has not always been prioritised despite research indicating its effectiveness and that pragmatic awareness is unlikely to develop through exposure alone (Taguchi, 2011). The marginalisation of pragmatics instruction in English language teaching could also be attributed to the field’s preoccupation with the language acquisition/use dichotomy in which the former is considered not only separate from, but also ascendant to the latter (Firth & Wagner, 1997, 2007). Furthermore, there has been a continuing dominance of form over meaning in language education and a lack of
emphasis on social context (Lantolf & Johnson, 2007). Alternatively, it may be due to context and the diverse backgrounds and needs of learners. If English language materials are produced for a mass market with diverse learners, then pragmatics, which foregrounds the contextual nature of language use, may be problematic and is therefore given scant attention.

**Pragmatics and English language teacher education**

Sharpless and Vasquez (2009) argue that English language teachers need explicit instruction about pragmatics in order to be able to effectively address pragmatics in the English language classroom. However, it has also been claimed that pragmatics has been and continues to be, for the most part, neglected in English Language Teacher education (Cohen, 2005; Eslami-Rasekh, 2004; Ishihara, 2007). This is supported by the findings of a study conducted on Master of TESOL courses in the United States (Sharpless & Vasquez, 2009). A nationwide survey was conducted across 94 TESOL programs to ascertain the prevalence and role of pragmatics in the TESOL curriculum and the resources used to teach pragmatics to Master of TESOL students. Less than a quarter of the programs reported having a dedicated pragmatics course and even fewer programs had pragmatics as a requirement. In the light of this research, it is evident that there is a need for pragmatics to have a more central role in English language teacher education.

**Pragmatics and English language coursebooks**

In line with interlanguage pragmatics studies, research on pragmatic input presented in coursebooks has taken a component view, focusing on individual pragmatic features. Research into pragmatics in coursebooks has targeted a variety of speech acts and how they are realised, including complaints (Boxer & Pickering, 1995), requests (Salazar Campillo, 2007; Uso-Juan, 2007), advice (Mandala, 1999), greetings (Kakiuchi, 2005) and a range of different speech acts (Nguyen, 2011; Vellenga, 2004). Other studies have focused on particular functions, including closings in dialogues (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991; Grant & Starks, 2001), telephone conversations (Wong, 2002), and discourse markers (Gilmore, 2004). These studies have found that coursebooks are an inadequate, and sometimes inaccurate, source of pragmatic information, as language functions or speech act realisations presented rarely correlate with those used in natural conversation.
Given the dominant role of English language coursebooks in the EFL classroom, it is the English language coursebook to which teachers and students would most likely turn for pragmatic information. However, it appears that more realistic pragmatic models are necessary to facilitate learners’ pragmatic competence (Nguyen, 2011). In addition, teachers’ manuals seldom provide supplementary pragmatic information (Vellenga, 2004). Teachers therefore have to rely on their own pragmatic knowledge, which may be limited given the role of pragmatics in English language teacher education, or look elsewhere to develop their pragmatic awareness, presupposing that teachers recognise the importance of pragmatics knowledge. It is proposed that in analysing the language used in English language coursebooks from a pragmatic perspective this study will contribute to learners’ and teachers’ knowledge of pragmatics and influence the development of materials used in contexts where English is primarily a lingua franca.

2.5.4 English use and pragmatics teaching in the expanding circle

Previous discussion has highlighted the intertwined and complex relationship that exists between language, culture and pragmatic meaning. Teaching and learning language will unavoidably also be a process of teaching culture, whether implicitly or explicitly, with implications for producing and interpreting pragmatic meaning. As was made clear in the discussion of English as a global language and ELF, English language use is becoming progressively more complex, both culturally and therefore pragmatically. In using English, learners will inevitably come across diverse systems of meaning, whether through contact with native speakers of English or with English language users from other cultures.

This has a number of implications for English language teaching. To begin with, it underscores the importance of understanding pragmatic meaning as part of the process of learning a language. Therefore, the pragmatic functioning of language should be made explicit to assist learners in learning English in the same way that linguistic aspects of English such as grammar, phonology, and lexis are. Importantly, pragmatics needs to be viewed as an integral part of language use, and therefore learning English, and not as an additional component to be inserted into the curriculum. Consideration also needs to be given to the cultural complexity of English language use. An expectation that learners will adopt English language pragmatic norms is both unrealistic and inappropriate, especially in contexts where
English is used as a lingua franca (House, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011; McKay, 2009). The pragmatic functioning of language should therefore be presented in its full complexity so that learners are better prepared to successfully navigate social relationships in intercultural communication (McKay, 2009). House (2003, p569) argues that “ELF users’ native culture-conditioned ways of interacting are ‘alive’ in the medium of the English language” and as such, the development of pragmatic knowledge and strategies is especially important for ELF users.

This has been highlighted in the Thai context where previous research into pragmatics has found that cross-cultural pragmatic differences exist and that pragmatic knowledge is transferred in the use of English (Wannaruk, 2008). However, pragmatics research in the Thai context has focused predominantly on cross-cultural differences in the performance of individual speech acts (Intachakra, 2004; Wannaruk, 2008). While this research has important implications for English language teaching in terms of pragmatic awareness, little is known about the teaching of pragmatics in naturalistic settings in the Thai context. It is intended that findings from the present study will contribute to knowledge in this area.

2.6 SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

English is increasingly used as a global lingua franca resulting in the diversified use of English across varied contexts (Canagarajah, 2007; Jenkins et al., 2011). A central component of ELF interactions is the ability to access and draw from a broad pragmatic repertoire in negotiating meaning (Canagarajah, 2007; House, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011). It follows that pragmatics is particularly relevant in English language classrooms in ELF contexts. However, pragmatics instruction appears to be marginalised in English language teaching, despite the dominance of the communicative approach in English language teaching, the role of pragmatics in communicative competence, and an upsurge of interest in pragmatics research. This study explores the teaching of pragmatics in EFL classrooms with a view to developing an understanding of the contributing factors to this problem.

Furthermore, most research to date that has looked at pragmatics in English language classrooms has done so with a focus on discrete aspects of pragmatics such as speech acts, routine formulae or pragmatic markers reinforcing a narrow view of pragmatics in which the complexity of contextual language use is reduced to
pragmalinguistic forms. Little research taking a broader perspective of pragmatics has been done in this field. While some research has been done on pragmatics in English language coursebooks, these studies have not looked at how coursebooks have been used by teachers to teach the pragmatic features of English and how the coursebook and teaching is interpreted by students in the classroom with implications for English language use beyond the classroom. This research seeks to fill this gap by exploring how pragmatics is dealt with in English language coursebooks as well as how pragmatics is taught and understood in the English language classroom.
Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

The problem this thesis seeks to address centres on English language teaching, in particular the teaching of pragmatics, in contexts where English is primarily used as a lingua franca and where issues of linguistic and cultural complexity are heightened. The previous chapters have established the socio-culturally, politically, and economically contested nature of English language teaching in foreign language contexts in the current era of increasing global English use. The literature review also highlighted the conflicting influences on the teaching of English language pragmatics. It was established that while the teaching of English language pragmatics has been the subject of much research and considered beneficial for English language learners, pragmatics instruction does not seem to be a priority in the English language classroom, English language coursebooks or English language teacher education. Furthermore, the literature reviewed in the previous chapter has demonstrated the relatively narrow perspective taken on pragmatics in applied linguistics research as it relates to English language teaching. I have suggested that a broader perspective of pragmatics may be necessary in seeking to understand the complexity of spoken interaction and how it is taught in English language classrooms in EFL contexts.

The purpose of this chapter is to situate the study within a theoretical framework that supports an investigation into the complex nature of the teaching of pragmatics, including how pragmatics is (re)presented in English language coursebooks, how coursebook materials are interpreted by teachers for the teaching of pragmatics, and how students perceive and utilise classroom-derived English language pragmatics in and beyond the classroom. Through explicating this theoretical framework, the assumptions that inform this study and the propositions of the research will be made clear. My aim is to present the theory of pragmatics that will underpin this study and establish the critical perspective that will be adopted in undertaking the research. In adopting a critical pragmatic approach, I propose to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of pragmatics in the EFL classroom.
This chapter begins with an overview of pragmatics theory, highlighting the
notion of pragmatics as a perspective on language (Section 3.1). Section 3.2 outlines
the particular pragmatic perspective that will be adopted, that of Verschueren (1999,
2009). This perspective will be extended, in Section 3.3, through consideration of
critical pragmatics and a critical discourse analysis approach. The chapter concludes
with a summary of the theoretical framework in Section 3.4.

3.1 PRAGMATICS – A PERSPECTIVE ON LANGUAGE

In Chapter One, I stated the definition of pragmatics as “an approach to
language which takes into account the full complexity of its cognitive, social, and
cultural (i.e. ‘meaningful’) functioning in the lives of human beings” (Verschueren,
2009, p. 19, italics removed). This definition of pragmatics situates pragmatics as a
perspective on language, a lens through which to view linguistics. Understanding
pragmatics as a perspective is in contrast with what has been referred to as the
component view in which pragmatics is assigned its own set of linguistic properties
to contrast with phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics (Huang, 2007; Mey,
2001). It is within the component view of pragmatics which pragmatics is assigned its own set of linguistic properties
to contrast with phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics (Huang, 2007; Mey,
2001). It is within the component view of pragmatics that theoretical linguistic
phenomena such as speech acts, implicatures, or deixis often become the focus or
‘object’ of pragmatic investigation (e.g. Leech, 1983; Levinson, 1983). However, in
order to more fully understand the dynamics of interaction in which participants co-
construct understandings of one another requires an exploration of the highly
contextual, situational, conditional, use- and user-specific circumstances of the
interaction, that is a pragmatic perspective. As Mey (2001, p. 5, italics in original)
asserts,

In contrast to traditional linguistics, which first and foremost concentrates on
the elements and structures (such as sounds and sentences) that the language
users produce, pragmatics focuses on the language-using humans. Put
differently, pragmatics is interested in the process of producing language and
its producers, not just in the end-product, language.

A pragmatic perspective on language is interested not only in what can be
demonstrated by the language produced by its user, but also by what can be shown
by the broader sociocultural context in which the language user is situated. In
attempting to exclude extra-linguistic factors in pragmatic investigations, the user is
also necessarily disregarded (Mey, 2001). By adopting a broader perspective on
Pragmatics, this study seeks to restore the user to understandings of pragmatic interactions in teaching English as a foreign language.

Pragmatics, by the definition used in this study, is interdisciplinary. It looks beyond linguistics to more fully understand the richness of language use. Pure linguistic descriptions cannot demonstrate the dynamics of human interaction or portray the complexity of the developments that occur between people engaged in language use (Mey, 2001). Utterances do not have meaning until they are placed in their human context, that is, the speaker’s linguistic, social, cultural and situational context (Mey, 2001; Verschueren, 1999).

The notion of context is therefore central to a pragmatic perspective. Context is dynamic. “It is to be understood as the continually changing surroundings, in the widest sense, that enable the participants in the communication process to interact, and in which the linguistic expressions of their interaction become intelligible” (Mey, 2001, p. 39). Figuring the context is necessarily an interpretative exercise. Within traditional pragmatics, context has been restricted to the aspects of surrounding reality to which the particular linguistic structures in interaction pointed (Auer, 2009). The concept of language referring to particular parts of its context is known as deixis (Verschueren, 1999). For example ‘today’ or ‘this afternoon’ points to time, the temporal dimension of context. While deixis highlights certain aspects of the context to which it refers, numerous other linguistic features, beyond specific reference, point to a broader context outside the particular speech event, such as the selection of a particular style or register from a repertoire (Auer, 2009). Furthermore, context here is not understood to be a fixed entity which is separate from language, but rather a complex, interactively constructed dynamic (Auer, 2009; Mey, 2001; Verschueren, 1999). That a broader conceptualisation of context is needed in understanding language use is well supported (e.g. Auer, 2009; Duranti & Goodwin, 1992; Hymes, 1972; Mey, 2001, 2003; Verschueren, 1999). It is a key element of the pragmatic framework adopted in this study (see Section 3.2.1).

A broader conceptualisation of context in which the context is interactively constructed allows for a broader understanding of meaning (Verschueren, 1999). Grice (1975) was among the first to gain acceptance in challenging a narrow structure-bound view of meaning in linguistics. He argued that meaning is situated not in language, but in the language user and more specifically in the intentions of
the language user following particular principles of cooperation (Grice, 1975). However, the meaning that is generated in interaction is often more than what is intended by the speaker (Verschueren, 1999). In line with what has been argued regarding context, Verschueren (1999, p. 48) contends that

> There is a need for a pragmatic return to meaning in its full complexity, allowing for interacting forces of language production and interpretation, and doing full justice to the central role of meaning in human reality, whether cognitive, social or cultural.

Verschueren’s (1999, 2009) perspective on pragmatics forms a prominent part of the conceptual framework for this study. This perspective is outlined in more detail in the following section.

### 3.2 VERSCHUEREN’S PRAGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

According to Verschueren (1999), individuals in society use language as their primary tool of generating meaning. They adapt themselves to the changing circumstances of their environment and, at the same time, they use language to modify and adapt the environment to their uses (Verschueren, 1999). Searle (1976), in classifying speech acts, introduced the idea of differences in direction of fit between words and the world. The suggestion was that some speech acts attempt to get the words to match the world (e.g., assertions) while other acts attempt to get the world to match the words (e.g., requests) (Searle, 1976). The underlying assumption here is that speech acts are tools that humans use to manage their environment. Verschueren (1999) extends this notion and highlights the adaptive element of this relationship. Humans adapt their language as well as use language to adapt the environment to their needs continuously. Therefore, the idea of a particular chunk of formulaic language, as in a speech act, presents a narrow view of how we use language. In line with Verschueren’s (1999) notion of linguistic adaptability, Mey (2001) refers instead to the concept of **pragmatic acts**, in which the context determines the nature of the acting and uptake is a necessary component of their performance. Words alone do not constitute a pragmatic act. The situational nature of pragmatic acting means it is dependent on both the context and the hearer’s response in order to be valid. As Hanks (1996, p. 266) argues, “meaning arises out of the interaction between language and circumstances, rather than being encapsulated in the language itself”.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

50
From this point of view, pragmatics seeks to understand what it is to use language, and more specifically, what speakers can do for themselves through the use of language (Verschueren, 2009). Pragmatics is concerned with understanding the factors involved in the making of linguistic choices in various contexts. Choices are involved in both the production and interpretation of language and not always consciously (Verschueren, 1999). From a pragmatic perspective, language is understood to be variable and negotiable, and consequently adaptable (Verschueren, 1999, 2009). Central to Verschueren’s (1999, 2009) model of pragmatics is the notion of variability. Variability is the aspect of language which determines the range of possible choices a user is able to employ. For example, in order to make a request, a language user can draw on various combinations of linguistic structure at all levels from morphology to syntax to phonology to discourse. However, choices are not made based on strict form-function relationships, but according to highly flexible strategies and principles. Negotiability is therefore a second important property of language. Once choices are made, they can always be renegotiated. For example, if a request is misunderstood or not well received, it can be re-worded and restated. Equally, a request could be transformed by its interpretation into an order or obligation. If language is to be considered both variable and negotiable, then it also needs to be understood as adaptable. Adaptability is the feature of language which allows users to make negotiable choices from the diverse range of possibilities in order to be able to communicate (Verschueren, 1999). The adaptability of language is evident in four key ways: context, structural layers, dynamics, and salience (Verschueren, 1999, 2009). To continue with the example from above, how language users negotiate meaning in making, accepting and declining a request from the varied structural choices available to them will depend on contextual variables such as social roles, relationships, and settings, as well as their awareness and interpretation of how to adjust their linguistic choices accordingly.

3.2.1 Elements of the meaningful functioning of language

In order to describe and explain what is going on pragmatically in language use, the four interrelated elements of adaptability – context, structure, dynamics and salience – need to be addressed (Verschueren, 1999, 2009). First, the contextual features of adaptability need to be identified. These include all aspects of the communicative context with which communicative choices mutually inter-adapt. In
line with the broad definition taken of pragmatics, context is not confined to linguistic elements, but includes cognitive, social, cultural, and physical elements. Paralinguistic elements, such as gesture and gaze, are also important. Furthermore, context is not static, but is interactively constructed, variable and negotiable.

Secondly, understanding how language is used involves an awareness of the structural elements of adaptability. Communicative choice-making can be signalled at all levels of linguistic structure from morpheme to utterance to discourse. It involves making choices which are functionally, geographically, socially or contextually based as evident in the use of various codes and styles.

A third element of adaptability that needs to be addressed is that of dynamics. Determining the dynamics of adaptability involves identifying the principles and strategies of communication which are employed in making and negotiating choices in producing and interpreting utterances and speech events.

The final element to consider is salience. “Not all choices are made equally consciously or purposefully. Some are virtually automatic, others are highly motivated” (Verschueren, 2009, p. 21). This work takes place in what Verschueren (2009) refers to as the ‘mind in society’ (following Vygotsky, 1978) rejecting a distinction between the cognitive and the social, and the dominance of one over the other. The processes contributing to the making of choices include perception and representation, planning and memory. Each of these processes occurs with different levels of awareness.

Crucially, these four elements are interdependent and bear different functional loads in establishing the meaningful functioning of language. First, the interaction of contextual and structural elements of adaptability can be used to define the locus of adaptation in a speech event. The interconnectedness of context and structure is of key significance. Context and structure are dynamic phenomena and they relate to each other dialectically. Secondly, explaining the dynamics is concerned with describing the relationship between context and structure and how it develops over time that is defining the processes of adaptation. Finally, the interaction between context and structure may have different levels of salience, or status, in the minds of language users. These elements and their relationships amount to the meaningful functioning of language as represented in Figure 3.1 below. As Verschueren (1999, p. 68) encapsulates,
The superordinate concern which guides the study of pragmatic phenomena as dynamic processes operating on context-structure relationships at various levels of salience, is simply to understand the meaningful functioning of language, i.e. as explained before, to trace the dynamic generation of meaning in language use.

![Diagram of Verschueren's Model of Pragmatics](image)

*Figure 3.1. Verschueren’s Model of Pragmatics (1999, p. 67).*

Verschueren’s (1999, 2009) pragmatic model forms a key part of the theoretical framework for this study. It will inform understandings of pragmatics as represented in coursebooks, teaching practices and classroom interactions. However, in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the complex issues impacting the teaching of pragmatics in the chosen context, this study also adopts a critical stance and draws on additional theoretical perspectives which will be outlined in the following section.

### 3.3 ADOPTING A CRITICAL STANCE

This section of the chapter details the critical perspective adopted in this study. It discusses the notions of critical pragmatics (Section 3.3.1) and critical discourse analysis (Section 3.3.2). These constructs in conjunction with the perspective on pragmatics outlined above will form the theoretical lens through which I will interpret the data in this study.
3.3.1 Critical Pragmatics

Pragmatics in its pursuit of meaning in language use is uniquely suited to investigating “the ways in which meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of domination” (Thompson, 1990, p. 56). Mey (2001) refers to this particular undertaking as critical pragmatics. A critical pragmatic approach concentrates on areas of language use that are critically shaped by the relations of power in society, situating language users in a ‘critical’ position (Mey, 2001). Power is understood as what one assumes through spoken or written language use, that is, discourse. Power is discourse in a control-oriented society (Fairclough, 1995). A distinguishing factor of power as a social construct is its acceptance as ‘natural’. As Fairclough (1995, p. 42) asserts, “naturalization gives to particular ideological representations the status of common sense, and thereby makes them... no longer visible as ideologies”. This study views ideologies as representations of facets of the world that influence the institution, preservation, and transformation of social relations of power (Fairclough, 2003). These ideological representations become normative, in terms of what is perceived as normal and also in terms of prescription and regulation. Furthermore, what is considered ‘common sense’ is not individually constructed but appeals to a history that individuals can use to add credence to their position (Verschueren, 2011). The role of critical pragmatics is to investigate the circumstances that bring about these processes of naturalization.

Researchers who have utilised critical pragmatics in their approach have demonstrated how language is used to construct certain meanings informed by particular beliefs and values (Fairclough, 1995, 2001, 2003, 2009; Gee, 2003; Mey, 2001; van Dijk, 2006; Van Leeuwen, 2007; Verschueren, 2011; Wodak, 2007). Critical pragmatics research highlights the ideological nature of language, identifying the ways in which language plays a central role in the establishment and preservation of power in society, including within educational institutions (Mey, 2001). It is concerned with exploring whose language we speak “and on whose authority we can form our words and utter our sentences, if not ‘correctly’, at least ‘appropriately’” (Mey, 2001, p. 320).

3.3.2 A Critical Discourse Analysis approach

In addition to the theoretical perspective on pragmatics outlined above, this study will draw on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), in particular Fairclough’s
Fairclough’s (1995, 2001, 2003) model of CDA. Critical pragmatics and CDA share a common view of language use as social practice, in which language use is shaped by and simultaneously shapes its social context (Fairclough, 1995; Mey, 2001). They draw on critical theory with the aim of exposing ideologies that have become naturalized, and therefore hidden, in order to bring about social change (Fairclough, 1995; Mey, 2001; Verschueren, 2011). In the present study, I draw on critical pragmatics and Fairclough’s (1995, 2001, 2003) model of CDA to explore the naturalised and naturalising representations and realisations of pragmatics in the ELT coursebook materials, classroom activities and among teachers and students in EFL contexts. A critical approach allows for an understanding of the wider social context in which pragmatics is represented in particular ways in English language classroom practices. I outline the analytic method employed in the study, that is, my application of CDA in Chapter Four (see Section 4.3). Here I discuss the broader social explanations and concepts that underpin my analysis.

Drawing on critical social theory (e.g. Gramsci, 1971; Habermas, 1972, 1979) and Halliday’s (1979, 2004) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Fairclough’s CDA model synthesises insights from social theory with detailed text analysis. According to Fairclough (1995), discourse as language use is a form of social practice. Language is understood to be interrelated dialectically with other aspects of social life so that language forms an integral part of social analysis (Fairclough, 1995, 2003). Therefore, discourse is considered to be shaped by elements of social life while also shaping, transforming and recontextualising these elements themselves. However, discourse is not shaped systematically or monolithically (Fairclough, 1995, 2003). Societies, including the institutions and domains within them, maintain a diversity of coexisting, distinct and often opposing discourses. In Fairclough’s (1995) model, discourse has multiple dimensions: a text, discursive practice (the process of the production and interpretation of a text), and social practice (the functioning of the text in the immediate, institutional, and broader societal contexts). Therefore in analysing discourse, the relationships between texts, the dynamics of interactions, as well as broader social conditions are all central components. This connects with Halliday’s (1979, 2004) multifunctional view of language incorporating ‘textual’, ‘interpersonal’ and ‘ideational’ functions in understandings of texts. Furthermore, in Fairclough’s CDA, the relationship between
specific discourses and their underlying conventions are considered to be complex. Fairclough (1995, 2003) conceptualises these conventions as *orders of discourse*. These conventions, from an institutional level, structure social spaces into discourses in particular ways (Fairclough, 2003). Furthermore, discourses of various institutions are also positioned in particular ways by societal conventions. These processes are manifested in the *intertextuality* and *interdiscursivity* of texts (Fairclough, 1995, 2003). Intertextuality refers to “how texts draw upon, incorporate, recontextualise and dialogue with other texts” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 17). Interdiscursivity refers to the specific combination of genres, discourses, and styles in a text and how they are realised in the text (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999).

**Recontextualisation and Genre Chains**

Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) also draw on the concept of the recontextualisation in CDA. The notion of recontextualisation was introduced by Bernstein (1990) in his work on pedagogical discourse. Bernstein (1990, pp. 183-184) referred to pedagogic discourse in terms of a recontextualising principle, “a principle for appropriating other discourses and bringing them into a special relation with each other for the purposes of their selective transmission and acquisition”. The various changes which happen with recontextualisation highlight the practices and values which are at risk in the particular context. Recontextualisation is a key notion in this study in terms of identifying practices and values at play in the teaching of pragmatics through the coursebook in teachers’ classroom practices. Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) emphasise the dialectic nature of the processes of recontextualisation. They interpret recontextualisation as one practice colonizing another, while simultaneously being appropriated within another, giving rise to contradictions, tensions and incompatibilities instantiated as hybridity. CDA is able to explore the processes of recontextualisation in detail by analysing the intertextuality and interdiscursivity of texts.

Significant to relations of recontextualisation is the concept of genre chains, a manifestation of a network of different, yet interconnected, texts (Fairclough, 2003). As Fairclough (2003, p. 31) argues,

> Genre chains contribute to the possibility of actions which transcend differences in space and time, linking together social events in different social practices, different countries, and different times, facilitating the
enhanced capacity for ‘action at a distance’ which has been taken to be a defining feature of contemporary ‘globalisation’, and therefore facilitating the exercise of power.

With respect to this study, the concept of genre chains allowed me as researcher to gain insight into the network of social practices, from global coursebook production choices to interpretation and enactment by ‘global’ native speaker English teachers in the local Thai context to uptake by Thai learners of English, that show the relative significance of pragmatics in relation to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language at the time of the study.

3.4 CONCLUSION

The theoretical approaches comprising the study’s theoretical framework are outlined below in Figure 3.2.

They are based on specific understandings of pragmatics, discourse and ideology with a shared interest in power and/or context, and language choices. From this view, language use is considered to be social practice and cannot be fully understood apart from the sociocultural environment in which it takes place. Furthermore, the influence of other contexts in which individuals participate will also impact on their language use. This study draws on the theories of critical pragmatics and critical discourse analysis to develop understandings of issues of power in the
representations and teaching of pragmatics in a Thai English language classroom. Drawing on Verschueren’s (1999) Pragmatic Perspective overlaid with Critical Pragmatics and Fairclough’s (1995, 2003) Critical Discourse Theory enabled me as researcher to make visible the ideology and power in the findings and implications. It allowed me to make links between what I was seeing in the text and how that is a linguistic manifestation or realisation of certain social understandings with respect to English language in use. This chapter has outlined the theoretical perspectives that will inform this study. Chapter Four discusses the study’s methodology and research design including my application of CDA as analytic method.
Chapter 4: The Methodology

In the preceding chapter I outlined the theoretical perspectives on pragmatics and discourse which inform the study’s analysis. This chapter presents the study’s methodology including the research design, the data generation methods and the analytic method. As previously explained in Chapter One, this study aims to explore the deeply conflicted area of teaching English language in use in contexts where other culturally-embedded pragmatic considerations operate with implications for teaching and learning English. In this chapter, I elucidate the design of this study and how it will enable the investigation of the research questions. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How is language in use, that is, pragmatics, presented in global ELT coursebooks?

2. How do teachers in the EFL context of Thai ELT classrooms represent and interpret global ELT coursebook materials to teach the pragmatic features of English?

3. How do students perceive and interpret the pragmatic features of English both in and beyond the classroom in the Thai EFL context?

In Chapters One and Two of this thesis, I have highlighted a number of conundrums and concerns as they relate to English language teaching and learning. These include the global use of English as a lingua franca; the prevalent use of commercially produced and globally distributed English language coursebooks; the preference for ‘native speaker’ teachers; the complex inter-relationship between language and culture; and finally how the intricacies of authentic spoken interaction can be taught within these seemingly contradictory realities.

This study aims to investigate empirically the ways in which a global ELT coursebook, five English language teachers, and 15 Thai EFL students, represent and interpret English language in use, that is, pragmatics in English language classes at a Bangkok English language school. From this, understandings can be developed regarding the ways that particular teachers and students make meanings about English language in use as represented in a predominantly westernised, commercially
produced and globally distributed ELT coursebook. Their accounts, in addition to the coursebook analysis, provide important insights into how English is being taught for use in contexts where English is a foreign language and used as a lingua franca.

The chapter begins by outlining the key considerations in designing the study and explaining the research project’s case study design (Section 4.1). Section 4.2 theorises the data generation methods utilised in the study. Next, I discuss the particular method of Critical Discourse Analysis that was used (Section 4.3). Section 4.4 addresses considerations of validity and reliability. The chapter ends with the conclusion in Section 4.5.

4.1 DESIGNING THE RESEARCH

The shaping of this study was marked by several key decisions – the research problem, the context, the theoretical framework, the methodological approach, and the methods of data generation and analysis. Each decision informed and was informed by the others in an effort to achieve alignment of perspective and ensure the veracity of the study. Designing research entails making choices which are informed by the researcher’s perspectives on ontology, epistemology and methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Ontology refers to what it means to be. Epistemology is concerned with what it means to know and the relationship between the inquirer and the known, while methodology is how we go about gaining knowledge of the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The researcher’s beliefs and values influence the choices the researcher makes at each stage of the research.

This study is qualitative in that it endeavours to make sense of phenomena in their natural contexts drawing on the various meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Given that pragmatics involves beliefs, attitudes, interpretations and motivations of the researcher and participants, quantification is not only problematic, but unproductive. More appropriate is an attempt to produce a ‘rich description’ that gives rise to a detailed, dynamic, and multidimensional characterisation of how English language use in various contexts is perceived and utilised by the participants in the study. Specifically, an instrumental case study design was employed, informed by critical theory and relying on ethnographic tools to generate and analyse data.
Stake (1995, p. xi) defines case study as “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances”. This study is instrumental in that it seeks to provide insight into a particular issue beyond the case itself (Stake, 1995), namely the prevalent use of ELF and the teaching and learning of pragmatics in EFL classrooms. The case for this study is the teaching of pragmatics through coursebook materials in an EFL class in Thailand focusing on instructional episodes around spoken discourse. It is bounded by the coursebook across four terms with each term corresponding to three chapters of the coursebook. The idea of ‘boundedness’ is central to definitions of case study (Duff, 2007; Merriam, 2002; Stake, 1995, 2003). As Stake (2003, p. 135) asserts, “it is common to recognise that certain features are within the system, within the boundaries of the case, and other features outside”. However, defining this bounded-system is not without its problems. Within the conceptual framework for this study, language, culture and context are viewed as dynamic, negotiated and changeable. This understanding, as Luke (2002) contends, makes delineating the context and ultimately defining the boundaries of a case problematic. My study involved an English language school in Bangkok in which students are free to come and go from term to term and different teachers are assigned to new classes each term. The coursebook provides continuity and standardisation in this context. For this reason, my case was bounded temporally by the implementation of a coursebook across four consecutive six-week terms in 2012/2013.

This study is critical in that it aims to understand the workings of a Thai EFL context, specifically the implementation of a global ELT coursebook by native speaker teachers of English to teach the pragmatic features of English spoken interaction to Thai students. As Fairclough notes (2003, pp. 202-203) “The aim of critical social research is better understanding of how societies work and produce both beneficial and detrimental effects, and of how the detrimental effects can be mitigated if not eliminated”. The study’s case study design is informed by a critical theoretical perspective. While traditional case study seeks to examine ‘what is’, a critical approach to case study assumes that “the conditions for existence within a particular context are not as they could be for specific subjects” (Madison, 2011, pp. 5, italics in original). The interpretations of analysis informed by theoretical understandings suggest what could be in terms of social change and developing
critical awareness (Fairclough, 2003). In adopting a critical approach, the researcher aims to contribute to changing conditions which restrict choices, limit meaning and disadvantage particular individuals and communities, for the purpose of facilitating greater equity (Madison, 2011). From a critical perspective, reality is understood to be shaped by historical, social, political, cultural, and economic values which become apparent over time (Lincoln & Guba, 1998). Furthermore, knowledge is perceived as transactional and subjective, mediated by the values of the researcher and participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1998).

As previously noted, this study is situated in a theoretical framework which views language and culture as inseparable and highlights the importance of understanding language in context. However, as highlighted in Chapter One, research has shown that English language classrooms and coursebooks are often an inadequate source of pragmatic information (Nguyen, 2011; Vellenga, 2004). Therefore, investigating pragmatics with the view to expanding choices and understanding is critical for language learners to be able to successfully communicate interculturally. Within a critical paradigm, this aim needed to be balanced with refraining as much as possible from imposing my own agenda as researcher on what emerged from the study. A critical perspective suggests locally and socially co-created descriptions which give voice to local understandings and the participants’ negotiated meanings (Geertz, 2000). As Holliday (2009, p. 147) argues, “decentered research methodologies need to allow critical spaces in which the unexpected can emerge, and the narratives of subjects take on a life of their own”.

Given the centrality of context to pragmatics, a research approach which foregrounds contextual factors was important for the integrity of the study. Ethnographic-oriented research, in contrast to other qualitative designs, involves a detailed exploration of context (Duff, 2007; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Holliday, 2007). Therefore, this study took an ethnographic approach to case study affording the opportunity to develop a richer understanding of contextual factors and their relations with pragmatics teaching and learning in EFL contexts. The study is not an ethnography per se. Rather, it is a case study design that uses ethnographic tools. The methods utilised in the study aimed to observe, collect and interpret naturally occurring data with the purpose of generating a rich description of the case consistent with ethnography. Used in conjunction with CDA, an ethnographic
approach is particularly useful in its ability to shed light on numerous components of a social practice. As Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999, p. 62) assert, “it also provides an invaluable context for assessing the articulatory process in the practice and the specific function of discourse in it”. The data generated in this study were synthesised and analysed using CDA.

4.2 METHODS OF DATA GENERATION

Data for this study were generated from five sources: the coursebook and associated materials, video recordings of lessons, teacher and student interviews, field notes, and a research journal. The data inform an in-depth understanding of pragmatics in an EFL classroom, specifically, how pragmatics is taught and learned, and how this meets the needs of learners using English as a lingua franca. In order to be able to explore these issues in-depth and given the data omnivorous nature of case study design, multiple data sources were essential. Furthermore, it is important to have several data sources from which to draw for the purposes of developing a comprehensive, deep, multi-layered synthesis. However, there are key considerations in generating data of a qualitative nature. In the following sub-sections, I discuss these considerations looking at document collection, video recording, semi-structured and stimulated recall interviewing in particular. The specific details of my data collection within the case site will be addressed in the Chapter Five.

4.2.1 Document Collection

Documents, in particular, the coursebook and associated materials, are a key data source for this study. As Merriam (1988, p. 118) notes, “documents of all types can help the researcher uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem”. Prior (2008) makes the point that, while documents have traditionally been viewed in research as containers of content, they should also be considered in terms of their functioning in their broader social context. This study investigates the content of the documents collected, namely the coursebook and associated teaching materials, for their representations of English language use. However, it is also concerned with these documents as part of a network of social practices that constitute teaching and learning English language in use in EFL contexts. Accordingly, the documents were analysed as active participants for the ways in which they positioned the readers of the text, specifically
the teachers and the students in the study. In addition, the use of the documents as materials in classroom activities and interviews were analysed.

4.2.2 Video Recording

Video recording was used to capture the practices of teaching spoken interaction and how this is responded to in the chosen context. Video recorded data provides a greater density of data and more contextual data than can audio recorded data and observations recorded as field notes (Dufon, 2002). It also allows for more accurate identification of speakers, as well as providing important paralinguistic information including gesture, proxemices, and other interactional cues. This is particularly important for language learning classrooms as language learners may utilise paralinguistic cues to a greater degree when their linguistic means are limited (Dufon, 2002).

However, despite the capacity of video to capture a significant amount of auditory and visual data, the view of what can be seen in the classroom is still confined by the camera’s range (Dufon, 2002). This limitation can be addressed to a certain extent by the use of multiple cameras to record from multiple angles. Nonetheless, given the small number of students and the desire to intrude as little as possible on the classroom, a single camera was used for this study. Field notes served as an additional reference to the video recordings. A further limitation of video is that it cannot capture whether the event recorded is frequent or typical (Dufon, 2002). Other data sources can gather this kind of information as was the case in this study through the use of interviews.

4.2.3 Semi-structured Interviews

Video recording, while able to capture events, cannot capture participants’ perceptions or explanations of events. Therefore, during subsequent interviews with participants, stimulated recall and semi-structured interview techniques were utilised to discuss, re-view and potentially re-interpret the events recorded.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from the teacher participants regarding the teaching of pragmatics and their interpretation of the teaching materials. The participating students were interviewed about their interpretation of the teaching of pragmatics and their specific English language needs beyond the classroom. Interviews, as a method for obtaining data, provide the
researcher with an opportunity to probe informants in considerable depth (Kvale, 2007). Semi-structured interviews afford the researcher a certain amount of flexibility with regard to the order in which questions are posed, allowing the interview to unfold more naturally and allowing follow-up of participants’ initiatives (Carspecken, 1996; Simons, 2009). They allow the interviewee the opportunity to elaborate on their responses to scheduled questions (Fairclough, 2003). Furthermore, they give the researcher and the informants the opportunity to ask for clarification as the interview proceeds. For the purposes of consistency, interview schedules were used as a guide throughout all interviews and are provided in Appendix E and F respectively.

The interviews allowed me to elicit interpretations from the interviewees about their actions in and perspectives of other corpus materials, namely, the coursebook and associated materials, and the English language classes I observed. In addition, the interviews enabled me to prompt accounts of the participants’ multiple subjectivities, for example, by asking about students’ uses of English beyond the classroom or asking teachers about their own language learning experiences.

As Block (2000, p. 762) asserts, interviews are “complex social and sociolinguistic events” and as such cannot be seen as a clean window on the mind of participants. Therefore, the descriptions and interpretations of the interview data can only be seen as partial (re)presentations rather than veridical. The accounts that interviewees provide to me as researcher are particular and contingent according to what is appropriate to say in a particular community and within its discourse (Block, 2000). In this study, participants’ accounts can be seen as voices of particular discourse communities, namely those of English language teachers and English language students. My findings are my interpretation as researcher of the interviews and their transcripts and are therefore particular. As Fairclough (2001, p. 138) notes, “the only access that the analyst has to [the accounts of participants] is in fact through her capacity to herself engage in the discourse processes she is investigating”. As researcher, I employ my own interpretative procedures including assumptions, beliefs, knowledge of language and culture, in order to interpret and explain how the participants in the study draw upon theirs. This necessitates reflexivity in terms of my role in the production and interpretation of these texts and I account for this in the findings.
Unavoidably, as a co-constructed social event, the research interview is imbued with power imbalances. For example, a number of power imbalances were present in my interviews including: my right as interviewer to ask questions and initiate topics; to decide what and how to ask and when; and to determine when to terminate a line of questioning. Furthermore, extending beyond the interview context, asymmetries existed in terms of my right as researcher to shape how the interview data is recontextualised into a new context. This is taken into account during the analysis using CDA (Fairclough, 2001, 2003).

In addition, I want to note that the participants exercised agency in terms of the interview process and its content. For example, Matt determined the location for our first interview outside the school in a more ‘neutral’ environment. In addition, the participants engaged with me as interviewer in multiple ways. At times interviewees used the interview as an opportunity to unload frustrations related to teaching and learning English. In several cases, students commented that the interviews provided them with a unique opportunity to use and practise English. Interesting tangents were at times initiated by participants which I then followed up with further questions before returning to the prompts and questions on the interview schedules.

4.2.4 Stimulated Recall Interviews

In addition to semi-structured interviews, stimulated recall interviews were conducted with participating teachers to re-view and co-interpret specific events around their teaching of spoken interaction using the video-recordings of the classes observed. Stimulated recall is a type of verbal report protocol which is done retrospectively to gain insight into an individual’s cognitive processes around a particular event or activity (Ericsson & Simon, 1993). Participants are given a stimulus, such as a video-recording of their involvement in an event or activity, to elicit a verbal report of what they were thinking and doing during that event or activity (Gass & Mackey, 2000). In cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics, stimulated recall has been widely viewed in terms of information-processing theory where information stored in an individual’s short-term memory is understood to be accessible for retrieval via verbal reports given that appropriate elicitation procedures have been followed (Ericsson & Simon, 1993; Gass & Mackey, 2000). More recently, drawing on sociocultural theory, this view of stimulated recall has been challenged questioning the feasibility of separating cognition from the social and
cultural context in which it exists (Smagorinsky, 2001; Swain, 2006). As Smagorinsky (2001, p240) argues, “if thinking becomes rearticulated through the process of speech, then the protocol is not simply representative of meaning at a previous point in time. It is, rather, an agent in the production of meaning.” Therefore, from a sociocultural theoretical perspective, what is said or verbalised is not understood as representative of thought, but rather as the transformation of it leading to new ideas and representations (Swain, 2006). In the context of interview, thought is further mediated within interaction and stimulated recall is not only a re-interpretation but a co-interpretation of events that have taken place.

4.3 ANALYTIC METHOD

In line with the critical approach adopted in this study, the method that was employed to analyse the collected data is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) allowing for analysis that relates language/texts and contexts and power/ideology (Fairclough, 1995). Given that I am interested in analysing pragmatic components of coursebooks and their relation to English language use outside the classroom, CDA allows for an analysis of written and spoken texts which reveals the broader social context in which they operate. Due to the contextual nature of pragmatics, analytic tools which allow for macro, meso and micro analysis are critical to this study. These levels of analysis reflect contextual (macro) and linguistic (micro) features of texts within the considerations of the interactive meso conditions of their production and interpretation.

The version of CDA adopted in this study draws upon Systemic Functional Linguistics (see Halliday, 2004) and “sees and analyses a language as shaped (even its grammar) by the social functions it has come to serve” (Fairclough, 2009, p. 126). CDA provides an opportunity to analyse texts with the view to explaining how they contribute to the processes of making meaning (Fairclough, 2003). The textual analysis drew on Verschueren’s (1999) pragmatic framework to identify structural and contextual elements in the coursebook, interview and classroom observation data. Through CDA and utilising Verschueren’s (1999) theory of Pragmatics, various meanings were investigated including how pragmatic meanings are encoded, or not, in conversation dialogues in coursebooks; how teachers’ teaching of the coursebook activities recontextualise pragmatic features; what pragmatic features are prioritised
and taught; and how students and teachers represent pragmatic features and their relation to appropriate English language use both in and beyond the classroom.

The in-depth textual analysis of texts was complemented by a macro analysis of the broader context within which a text was situated and constructed (Fairclough, 2003). Such a macro analysis in this study was informed by an understanding of language and culture as interconnected where both are continually co-constructed, reflecting and informing new identities (Pennycook, 2007). Verschueren’s (1999, 2009) model of pragmatics contributed to explanations of pragmatic features and their relevance and use to the prevailing culture of ELF interactions in the Thai context.

4.3.1 Analytic toolkit

Across the data chapters I utilise different analytic tools as part of Fairclough’s (2003) CDA method. Across Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight, I use Fairclough’s (2003) concepts of recontextualisation and genre chains, introduced in Chapter Three. I use these concepts to analyse how pragmatics is represented across the genre chain of the study – from the coursebook to the teachers’ accounts and classroom practices to the students’ accounts and classroom interactions. I draw on Fairclough’s (2003) four recontextualising principles to analyse recontextualisation across the genres including: the presence or absence of particular elements; the degree of abstraction or generalisation from concrete events; the order or arrangement of events; and any additions in terms of explanations, evaluations and legitimations. These four principles were used to explore how pragmatics was recontextualised in the genre chain by the coursebook, through teachers’ classroom and interview talk, and through students’ accounts and classroom interactions.

To analyse the coursebook, I identified the inclusions and exclusions of pragmatics in light of the ELT literature on English language in use using Verschueren’s (1999) four dimensions of pragmatics – Structure, Context, Dynamics and Salience. Given that it is through context that social events are made more or less concrete, I propose that Fairclough’s (2003) recontextualising principle of the degree of abstraction can be seen in the coursebook’s (de)contextualisation of language in use. The order of events were analysed in terms of the coursebook structure and links to ELT methodology. Additions were analysed through detailed analysis of the external and internal features of the coursebook utilising a Coursebook Evaluation
Framework by McDonough, Shaw, and Masuhara (2012) in conjunction with Verschueren’s (1999) dimensions of pragmatics. The framework enabled me as researcher to identify the consistencies and contradictions in the coursebook as they related to the representation of English language in use.

In addition, as visuals provide important contextual information to coursebook conversation dialogues, photographs and illustrations accompanying the conversation dialogues were analysed drawing on Kress and Van Leeuwen’s (2006) visual grammar focusing on the environment, the social relationships, and the gender, age, profession, race, and ethnicity of the people depicted. Accents and language varieties used in the audiovisual materials supplementing the coursebook conversation dialogues were also examined.

In Chapter Seven, where I explore the teacher data, I applied thematic analysis and Fairclough’s (2003) recontextualising principle of presence and absence to identify which elements are excluded and included in relation to teachers’ decision making regarding the Conversation Strategies moving from the coursebook to the classroom teaching. In analysing the teachers’ classroom practices, I applied Fairclough’s (2003) four recontextualisation principles and examined the teachers’ pedagogical responses to the coursebook materials in terms of structure, context, dynamics and salience in line with Verschueren’s (1999) framework as enacted in their classroom practice.

My analysis of teachers’ classroom practices drew on research in the area of classroom interactional patterns and discourse (Cazden, 2001; Walsh, 2006). Classroom interactions in second language classrooms have been heavily researched by Walsh (2006) drawing on the foundational work of Cazden (2001) on the classroom discourse pattern of Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF). Walsh’s (2006) framework of classroom modes including their interactional features helps inform analysis of the teachers’ classroom interactions. Walsh (2006) identifies four modes evident in L2 classrooms: Managerial; Materials; Skills and systems; and Classroom context. Walsh (2006) argues that each mode has specific interactional features which align with particular pedagogical goals. Managerial mode is predominantly concerned with classroom management and lesson organisation. Materials mode is focused on orienting students to the materials used in the lesson. Skills and Systems mode is concerned with providing language practice in relation to particular aspects
of language or specific language skills. Classroom context mode allows for the facilitation of interactional opportunities in which students can draw on their diverse experiences and varied sociocultural contexts. Analysis of classroom discourse patterns and modes allowed me to identify the predominant classroom modes adopted by the teachers in study and how this did or did not facilitate the teaching and learning of pragmatics.

In Chapter Eight, my analysis of the student data drew on Verschueren’s (1999) concept of context to identify students’ reported uses of and contexts for using English outside the classroom. Data were analysed using an inductive method whereby all references to context in all of the students’ interviews were coded and retrieved. I then employed Fairclough’s (2001) CDA method of description, interpretation, and explanation to make connections between the students’ lexical choices and their broader social context.

Fairclough’s (2003) recontextualising principles were employed to analyse how students recontextualise pragmatics in their accounts of the coursebook and in their classroom interactions. In particular, I analysed which elements of the Conversation Strategies were included and excluded; how students ordered the Conversation Strategies; how much they generalised from the Conversation Strategies; and what was added in their representations of the Conversation Strategies. In my analysis of the students’ classroom interactions, I drew on Goffman’s (1981) theory of production formats in which he delineates three production roles: the animator, the author, and the principal. The animator refers to the speaker in action with the emphasis on the performance of speaking. The author is the originator of the words. The principal is one whose views are represented by the words uttered. These roles highlight different relationships between the person speaking and the actual activity or content of what is spoken.

In using the analytic tools identified above, this study identifies the discourses around teaching English language in use in EFL contexts and provides insight into how English language in use is being constructed through coursebooks, teacher talk and practice, and student talk and practice. In doing so, it illuminates the practices, identities, and values that come together in often contradictory ways within the social practice of teaching pragmatics in EFL contexts.
4.4 VALIDITY AND CREDIBILITY

While establishing validity in the type of qualitative research undertaken in this study necessitates a different set of criteria from those used in quantitative research, the issue of establishing trustworthiness is still central. A number of techniques have been utilised to help establish trustworthiness. First, data from multiple sources were collected, bringing rigor, depth, complexity and richness to the study. Secondly, the inclusion of stimulated recall interviews allowed for co-interpretation of the video recorded data by the researcher and the participating teachers. In addition, a thick description of the research context was generated with the aim of providing a credible overview of the site, the coursebook, the participants and the events observed within their broader sociocultural contexts. Finally, an audit trail was developed through a description of the research process and the documentation which was generated.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The research design outlined in this chapter offered a solid framework for exploring the aforementioned research questions from multiple perspectives with the aim of developing a comprehensive understanding of the teaching of pragmatics in English language classrooms. Through the multiple methods of data generation and analytical tools outlined in this chapter I sought to build a picture of how pragmatics is taught in English language classrooms in contexts where English is primarily used as a lingua franca. Given the complexity of English language use in these contexts, empirical data is needed to guide the future teaching of pragmatics as well as the design of coursebooks and associated teaching materials. I have approached this complex and multifaceted problem by looking at the coursebook which constitutes the curriculum; by examining teachers’ views and classroom practices; and through investigating students’ perspectives and classroom responses. The practical undertaking of the study will be discussed in further detail in the following chapter. The resulting account of the research undertaken is informed by the data generated and aims to offer insights into both the theory and practice of pragmatic interactions.
Chapter 5: The Study

The preceding chapter outlined the study’s methodology in terms of its theoretical underpinnings. This chapter outlines how the study was mobilised. I describe the case (Section 5.1), including the coursebook (Section 5.2), the classes (Section 5.3) and the participating teachers and students (Section 5.4). In addition, I provide an outline of the research plan (Section 5.5), and describe the data generation (Section 5.6) and ethical clearance procedures (Section 5.7). Finally, I introduce and explain the organisation of the data chapters to follow (Section 5.8).

5.1 THE CASE

The case for this study was bounded by the implementation of a global ELT coursebook in an adult EFL class at Bangkok English Language School (BELS) in Bangkok, Thailand across four consecutive six-week terms from November 2012 to June 2013. Thailand was chosen as a location for the study as it is a context where English is primarily used as a lingua franca and, therefore, the teaching of pragmatics is considered particularly important. In addition, my prior experience working in Thailand allowed for easy access to a research site and participants. To access the case study site, permission was sought and subsequently gained from the Director of Studies of an English language school for whom I had previously worked as an English language teacher. At the beginning of the term, two classes were identified by the Director of Studies as being potential case study sites. Both classes were beginning a coursebook during that term and were suitable to follow as case studies. Due to the fluid nature of classes from term to term it was decided to follow both classes for the first term in case either one did not continue and also to maximise the potential of having continuing students as participants. After the first term, the class with the most continuing student participants was chosen to be the focal class for the duration of the study. The case, bounded by the coursebook, included 5 participating teachers and 15 participating students.

The rationale for using the implementation of the coursebook as the case is due in part to the nature of language schools. Private language schools, like BELS, tend to have short terms of six to eight weeks with no requirement for students to continue
on to the next level. The way these schools are configured means that there is the possibility of a reasonable amount of student attrition from term to term. Furthermore, the policy at BELS is that the teacher changes for each class from term to term with the aim of providing students with more variety in terms of teaching styles but also as a countermeasure for the tendency of teachers to come and go. It is the coursebook that provides continuity across terms.

5.2 THE COURSEBOOK

The coursebook examined in the study is the McGraw-Hill publication *Hemispheres 2* (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008). It is studied as part of a sixteen level General English certificate course offered at BELS where the study took place (see Chapter One). *Hemispheres 2* (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008) is used as the curriculum for levels 9-12. The book is compatible with a communicative teaching approach focusing on the four macroskills – reading, listening, writing, and speaking. As mentioned in Chapter One (see Section 1.3.3), the *Hemispheres* series, which is published in the United States, focuses specifically on spoken interaction in each chapter of their books in a section called ‘Conversation Strategies’ (Cameron, Iannuzzi, et al., 2008; Cameron et al., 2007; Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008). The study focuses on the twelve instructional episodes on ‘Conversation Strategies’ in *Hemispheres 2* (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008).

The course has twelve core units and four review units. The coursebook’s planned organisation was taken up by the school in the study. Three core units were taught over the course of one six-week term and were associated with a school level, e.g., units one to three of *Hemispheres 2* constituted level nine, and units four to six were level ten, and so on. This determined the sequence in terms of how the coursebook was operationalised. However, there was no stipulation that the three core units within each level needed to be taught consecutively within the term and the expansion units were optional.

The *Hemispheres 2* course includes the following materials: a student book, a workbook, a Teacher’s manual, an audio CD, a DVD, and a DVD workbook. Teachers each have their own copy of the student book and workbook provided by the school and they are provided with a copy of the audio CD at the beginning of each term depending on the level they are teaching. Teachers’ manuals, DVDs, and
DVD workbooks are available in the staff resource area. Students are required to purchase the student book and workbook on enrolment at an additional cost to the course. At the time of the study the cost for the student book and workbook was 600 baht.

5.2.1 Coursebook Components

*The Student Book*

The student book is 144 pages and has twelve units (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008). In addition, there are four review chapters positioned at the end of every 3rd unit. Each unit includes, in this order, Reading, Vocabulary, Grammar, Listening and Speaking, Conversation Strategy, Writing, and TOEFL IBT focus sections.

*The Teacher’s Manual and Audio CD*

The teacher’s manual is 130 pages (Renn & Cameron, 2008). It includes instructions for each section of the units in the student book as well as answers for the student book and workbook activities. The audio CD has audio files for several of the unit activities. There is an audio file for each conversation model in the Conversation Strategy section.

*The Workbook*

The student workbook is 74 pages (Johannsen, 2008). It has twelve units with five sections – Reading, Vocabulary, Grammar, Conversation Strategies, and Writing. The workbook provides additional written activities to those in the student book.

*The Conversation Strategy Section*

Each unit has the same placement and layout of sections. The Conversation Strategy section of the coursebook is placed after the Listening and Speaking section and before the Writing section. The Conversation Strategy section constitutes one page with 3 subsections (see Appendix A).

The first subsection is a conversation dialogue overlayed on a picture illustrating the situation in which the conversation is taking place. The example conversation is presented in yellow speech bubbles which are situated near the corresponding pictured interlocutor. Additional white boxes are presented below each speech bubble with additional phrases or expressions to substitute into the conversation. The second subsection has controlled practice role plays to use the
language from the first subsection. The third subsection is a freer practice activity. Examples of Conversation Strategy workbook activities, teacher’s manual notes, and workbook key can be found in Appendices B, C, and D respectively.

5.3 THE CLASSES

The classes involved in my study took place twice a week over six week terms on Saturdays and Sundays. Each lesson was 2.5 hours totalling 5 hours per week and 30 hours per term. Each term the classes would change with attrition and the inclusion of new students. In addition, the classes would change teachers each term in line with the school’s policy.

The classes took place in a high-rise building in central Bangkok. Classrooms vary in size and are placed side by side down 3 hallways. All classrooms have a white board at the front of the class, and a small desk with a CD player and chair for the teachers next to the whiteboard. The students have chairs with built-in desks. The chairs are arranged side by side in a U-shape against three walls of the classroom facing the whiteboard.

The following table is a summary of the research plan as it unfolded from November 2012 – June 2013:

Table 5.1
The Research Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>BELS Level</th>
<th>Corresponding Hemispheres 2 Units</th>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>Teacher*</th>
<th>No of students in the class</th>
<th>Names of students interviewed*</th>
<th>Name(s) of lessons observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Nov 10-Dec 16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>8am weekend</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Fai Mod Wan</td>
<td>Asking about Preferences (Unit 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11am weekend</td>
<td>Matt</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Bee Nam Fon Fah Chompoo</td>
<td>Asking about Preferences (Unit 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Level</td>
<td>BELS Level</td>
<td>Corresponding Hemispheres 2 Units</td>
<td>Classes</td>
<td>Teacher*</td>
<td>No of students in the class</td>
<td>Names of students interviewed*</td>
<td>Name(s) of lessons observed</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Jan 12 – Feb 17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>8am weekend</td>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Fai Bee Wan Fon Boy</td>
<td>Offering, Accepting and Declining Invitations (Unit 4); Expressing Sympathy and Concern (Unit 5); and Hesitating and Refusing Politely (Unit 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Mar 2 – Apr 7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>8am weekend</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Bee Nam Ning Bomb Nong</td>
<td>Helping People Make Decisions (Unit 7); and Using Exclamations to Express Opinions (Unit 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Apr 27 – Jun 2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>8am weekend</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Bee Nam Ning Nui May Palm</td>
<td>Discussing Opinions (Unit 11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Teachers and students have been given pseudonyms to protect their privacy.

**Term 1**

In the first term, as previously mentioned, there were two classes that participated in the study. These classes were both studying Level 9 at BELS following Units 1-3 of *Hemispheres 2*. I approached each teacher for the classes informally to discuss the study and gain permission to access their classes. Both teachers agreed and I then sought permission from the students in the class to participate.

*Class 1 – 8AM weekend class*

The enrolment in this class at the time of the study was fifteen – three men and twelve women. The students in the class were mostly high school and university students, with two students who worked full-time. I observed one lesson over the course of the six-week term. The lesson I observed focused on the Conversation Strategy *Asking about and Expressing Preferences* from Unit 2 of *Hemispheres 2*. The teacher for this class chose not to teach the other two available Conversation Strategies for this level. I interviewed the teacher and three students.
Class 2 – 11:00AM weekend class

In this class, there were eighteen students – four men and fourteen women – enrolled at the time of the study. The class included almost equal numbers of high school students, university students, and full-time workers. As with Class 1, I observed one lesson during the term - the Conversation Strategy Asking about and Expressing Preferences from Unit 2 of Hemispheres 2. Similarly, the teacher for this class chose not to teach the other two Conversation Strategies for the level. I interviewed the teacher and five of the students in the class.

Term 2

In term 2, following on from the previous term, the classes had moved on to Level 10 corresponding with Units 4-6 of Hemispheres 2. Following term 1, it was decided to continue observing the 8AM class as three of the participants I had interviewed from the 11AM class were uncertain about continuing in term 2. In addition, two of the participants from the 11AM class decided to change class times to the 8AM class. As previously noted student attrition is a feature of private English language schools with students choosing to skip a term, discontinue study, change classes, or try another school.

Of the nineteen enrolled students in the 8AM class, eleven had continued the class from the previous term. The other eight students had either changed classes from another timeslot, tested into the class at Level 10, or were returning after one or two terms. There were five men and fourteen women with an almost equal balance of university students, high school students, and workers. I observed three lessons during the term. All three of the available Conversation Strategy lessons were taught. I interviewed the teacher and five students from the class. Six of the eight students I had interviewed in term 1 continued studying in term 2. However, two of those six students were unavailable during term 2 for interviews so an additional student was recruited and interviewed.

Term 3

Term 3 followed the 8AM class from term 2 as they continued to Level 11 and studied Units 7-9 of Hemispheres 2. Fifteen students were enrolled in the class, with eight students having continued from the previous term’s 8AM class. There were four men and eleven women with mostly university students, some high school students and some workers. I observed two lessons in term 3 – the Conversation
Strategies *Helping People Make Decisions* and *Using Exclamations to Express Opinions*. I interviewed the teacher and five students from the class. Three of the five students were interviewed for the first time.

**Term 4**

In term 4, the class from term 3 moved on to Level 12 studying Units 10-12 of *Hemispheres 2*. This was the final level of *Hemispheres 2* and the class were required to pass a test at the end of the term in order to proceed to the next level and a new coursebook. There were fifteen students enrolled in the class and eleven of these students had continued from the previous terms’ class. There were five male students and ten female. The majority of students were at university. The rest were at high school or working full-time. I observed one lesson in term 4 – the Conversation Strategy *Discussing Opinions*. I interviewed the teacher and six students from the class. Three of the six students were interviewed for the first time.

### 5.4 THE PARTICIPANTS

This study investigated an English language class for adults at a large, private English language school in Thailand. The study took place across four six-week terms. The participants included five teachers and fifteen students.

#### 5.4.1 The Teachers

I interviewed and observed five teachers from BELS for this study. The teachers all spoke English as their first language. Two of the teachers, Zoe and Emily had just started teaching at BELS at the time of the study. I approached each teacher at the beginning of the term and no-one I approached declined to participate. The five participants (3 males and 2 females) had varying teaching experience and had spent different amounts of time in Thailand as Table 5.2 indicates.
Table 5.2

*The Teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Language Learning Experiences</th>
<th>Teaching Qualifications</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Length of Stay in Thailand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>French, Thai</td>
<td>Degree; TEFL Certificate</td>
<td>10 years part-time</td>
<td>6 years part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>Spanish, Latin, French, French, Chinese, Japanese</td>
<td>Degree; TEFL Certificate</td>
<td>2.5 years</td>
<td>2.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>South African</td>
<td>Afrikaans</td>
<td>Degree; TESOL Certificate</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Degree; TESOL Certificate</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>French, Spanish, Thai, Latin, Sanskrit</td>
<td>Degree; MPhil; PhD</td>
<td>20 years part-time</td>
<td>20 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.2 The Students

I interviewed fifteen students from BELS for the study – thirteen females and two males. All the students were Thai. Thai is their first language. While some students mentioned that they were learning Mandarin, all the students considered English to be their primary second language. The majority of the students were in their early twenties, with one student in his late thirties. The participants included university students and people who had full-time jobs.

Table 5.3

*The Students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Participants</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>University Major</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bee</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>University Student</td>
<td>Multimedia and Digital Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Participants</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>University Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nam</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Interior Designer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fai</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>University Student</td>
<td>Industrial Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Small Business Owner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fon</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>University Student</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wan</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>University Student</td>
<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chompoo</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sales Coordinator in a Trade Company</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fah</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant at an English language Media company</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Sales for family’s Printing Company</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ning</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>University Student</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bomb</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>University Student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nong</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Recent University Graduate</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nui</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>University Student</td>
<td>Airline Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>University Student</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>University Student</td>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.5 THE RESEARCH PLAN

The timeframe for data collection is outlined below in Table 5.4.

#### Table 5.4

*Timeframe for Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Ethical Clearance</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refine Data Generation</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcription</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.6 GENERATING THE DATA

Data source 1: The coursebook and associated materials

One of the primary sources of data is the coursebook used in the class along with any associated teaching materials, including audio visual materials, workbooks, teacher manuals, lesson plans, and online resources. Specifically, the focus is on the teaching of spoken interaction in which pragmatics has an integral role. The coursebook selection was delimited to that used in the chosen teaching context because I wanted to gain an in-depth understanding of the coursebook materials not only through my own analysis but also through the perspectives of the teachers and students who are using them in the chosen context.

Data source 2: Video recording of lessons

The lessons in which spoken interaction was taught were video recorded using a digital video camera. The camera was placed at the back of the classroom in an unobtrusive position. It was set on wide angle and left untouched while recording to ensure that information was not missed and that bias was not introduced through focusing on particular students or aspects of the class (Swann, 2001). The video footage was then used for stimulated recall in semi-structured interviews, and later transcribed and analysed using Critical Discourse Analysis (see Section 4.3).

Data source 3: Semi-structured interviews and Stimulated Recall interviews

The aim of the interviews was to generate teachers’ and students’ accounts of their experiences of and responses to the Conversation Strategy sections of *Hemispheres 2*. The participating teachers and students were interviewed once per term using semi-structured interview techniques (Carspecken, 1996; Simons, 2009). The interviews were semi-structured in that they began with a set of predetermined questions and prompts but also allowed for a certain amount of flexibility in terms of asking follow-up questions and clarifying responses. The prompts and questions are provided in Appendix E and F respectively. Interviews occurred at four separate times throughout the teaching of the coursebook. Teaching materials taken from the coursebook were used as reference tools in the interviews. The interview questions for the teachers focused on how he or she understood the teaching of spoken interaction in the coursebook and the ways he or she understood and used the material for teaching (see Appendix E). The interview questions for the students centred on how they responded to the teaching of spoken interaction and any
associated materials as well as what they perceived as significant to their learning of spoken interaction and needs for English outside the classroom (see Appendix F). The interviews took place in English.

The time estimate for the teacher interviews was approximately one hour and the projection for the student interviews was approximately thirty minutes. In some cases, the interviews went longer than anticipated. The interviews were conducted in an office or an empty classroom with the exception of the first interview with Matt which was conducted in the food court of the building in which BELS is located. The interviews were conducted at times negotiated with the interviewees. The interviews were recorded on a digital recorder with an internal microphone. Back-up recordings were made with an additional digital recorder.

I transcribed the bulk of the interviews myself, with the exception of five teacher interviews that were transcribed professionally. In all cases I used the audio recordings to check the transcripts to ensure as much as possible the quality of the transcript and also to familiarise myself anew with the content and context of the interviews.

The stimulated recall interviews with participating teachers took place immediately following the semi-structured interviews. Teachers were shown excerpts from the video-recorded classes focusing on two or three particular events as the basis for the interviews. The events were chosen for discussion based on emerging themes from the interviews with the student participants.

**Data source 4: Field notes**

Immediately following the observed lessons and the interviews, I took notes to record participants’ actions and responses and my observations of them. They were used together with the audio and video recordings to compare reactions made at the time the data were collected and those developed upon reflection. I recorded descriptions of what I observed and any significant events or moments of uncertainty regarding the observations and research questions. This has aided researcher reflexivity and contributed to the co-construction of interview and observation data texts (Madison, 2011). In this way, field notes have been a useful tool for reflecting upon and revealing my researcher positionality (Lemesianou & Grinberg, 2006).
**Data source 5: Research journal**

Throughout the research project, I kept a journal detailing both the everyday processes of the investigation and my feelings and reactions to them. In addition to field notes, this was a useful tool for reflexivity. Keeping a research journal also assisted in reflecting on the evolving research process (Swann, 2001). Furthermore, it has helped to illuminate and clarify the interactions between myself and the participants and any influences on the data due to this. The research journal has also helped to make the research more transparent and exposed the underlying processes of the data analysis.

### 5.7 ETHICAL CLEARANCE

Formal ethical clearance requires the researcher to consider whether participants will be harmed as a result of the study and identify potential risks to participants. While the risks to both participants and the researcher in this study were considered to be low and the interviews and observations were not expected to offer any risk beyond the ordinary, harm to participants may have arisen as a result of anxiety or mild stress at being observed or interviewed. Furthermore, as Madison (2011, p. 4) notes, 'representing Others is always going to be a complicated and contentious undertaking'. How participants’ perceptions have been represented in the written account of the research and what has been included or excluded may cause discomfort or concern for some participants. As researcher, I aimed to mitigate these risks through giving participants the opportunity to discuss their reactions and understandings throughout the research process. The researcher’s contact details and those of the research institution, including the supervisors, were also provided to participants to discuss any issues that may arise.

Every effort was made to ensure that this study was conducted ethically and responsibly. Application to the QUT Ethics Committee for ethics approval was made and subsequent approval was given. Permissions were gained through written consent from the English language college and the individual participants. Involvement was on a voluntary basis and participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time. Anonymity has been upheld for the participants with the use of pseudonyms throughout the research project and in any related reports. While the specific objectives of the research cannot be explicitly explained to the participants at
the risk of influencing their responses and behaviours, the general aims of the study (contextual language use) were made clear.

5.8 THE DATA CHAPTERS

In chapters one and two of this thesis, I have highlighted a number of challenges and concerns as they relate to English language teaching and learning. These include the global use of English as a lingua franca; the prevalent use of commercially produced and globally distributed English language coursebooks; the preference for ‘native speaker’ teachers; the complex inter-relationship between language and culture; and finally how the intricacies of spoken interaction can be taught within these seemingly contradictory realities. My case is concerned with how these contradictory realities unfold in a classic EFL teaching and learning context in Thailand which is coursebook-driven with predominantly ‘native speaker’ teachers. I am exploring this through the following research questions:

• How is language in use, that is, pragmatics, presented in global ELT coursebooks?

• How do teachers in the EFL context of Thai EFL classrooms represent and interpret global ELT coursebook materials to teach the pragmatic features of English?

• How do students perceive and interpret the pragmatic features of English both in and beyond the classroom in the Thai ELF context?

The logic of the subsequent data chapters follow the research questions, dealing with each question in a separate chapter. Their inter-relatedness will then be explored in the final chapter. Accordingly, Chapter Six is a detailed analysis of the coursebook; Chapter Seven examines the teachers’ interpretations and practices; and Chapter Eight presents the findings regarding the students. Chapter Nine will discuss how the key findings from the three data sets are related to each other and also how they relate back to the conundrums and concerns of the broader research problem.

The method for analysis that I use, Fairclough’s CDA (2001, 2003), provides a rigorous and detailed method for investigating each data set and also for uncovering the relationship between the three data sets. Following Fairclough’s CDA and utilising Verschueren’s (1999) pragmatic framework, I examine how language in use
is presented in the coursebook; how the pragmatic features of English in the coursebook are then taken up by teachers; and finally the students’ uptake and interpretation of the coursebook and teaching. As outlined in Chapter Four, the method is one of recontextualisation and follows the movement from data set to data set, genre to genre, thereby uncovering how they are related and what that tells us about the broader issues that constitute the research problem. The genre chain followed in the study is outlined below in Figure 5.1.
ELT Literature and English language in use
(Chapter 2)

How English language in use (pragmatics) is represented in *Hemispheres 2* - a global ELT Coursebook
(Chapter 6)

How teachers describe their uptake of the coursebook’s representations in their interview talk (the language of practical ELT)
(Chapter 7)

How teachers enact their uptake of the coursebook’s representations in their classroom practice
(Chapter 7)

Students' uptake and interpretations of pragmatics as represented in the coursebook and enacted by the teachers in their interview talk (the language of learning English)
(Chapter 8)

*Figure 5.1. The genre chain of the study*
In this chapter, I examine English language in use, that is, pragmatics, as it is represented in the coursebook *Hemispheres 2* and associated materials. The chapter focuses on the first of the study’s research questions: How is language in use, that is, pragmatics, presented in a global ELT coursebook? The coursebook constitutes the curriculum at the English Language School in Bangkok, Thailand and as such is a key reference for teachers and students in the study. In line with an understanding that language is situated and culturally influenced, there has been an increasing recognition that the teaching of pragmatics needs to play a more central role in English language teaching. However, it remains unclear whether this can be done effectively given the global use of English and global distribution of and predominant reliance on commercially produced ELT coursebooks. This chapter will explore what constitutes pragmatics in a global ELT coursebook. The following two chapters will explore how this is taken up and enacted by teachers and subsequently taken up and enacted by students in and outside of the ELT classroom.

In this chapter, I will focus on three main areas - the *Hemispheres* series and *Hemispheres 2* in particular; the Conversation Strategy section of the coursebook; and three examples of Conversation Strategies from *Hemispheres 2*. Although I focus on these three main areas, I will be looking in considerable depth at the Conversation Strategy section and three examples from the coursebook. The logic is a nested one in which the three Conversation Strategy examples sit within a broader understanding and interpretation of the Conversation Strategy section, and which are then both situated within understandings of the macro context of *Hemispheres 2* and the *Hemispheres* series. The aim is to explain how an ELT coursebook presents English language use given the coursebook’s global market and its actual localised use.

This chapter begins with a discussion of Coursebooks as Genres of Governance (Fairclough, 2003) (Section 6.1). I then present an overview of the *Hemispheres* series and a detailed description and discussion of *Hemispheres 2* (Section 6.2).
Section 6.3 outlines and explains key features of the Conversation Strategy section. These features will be further explicated, in Section 6.4, through analysis of the Conversation Strategy *Starting Conversations*. This section will be followed by a discussion of the findings from the coursebook analysis (Section 6.5). The chapter concludes with a summary of the key points raised in this chapter and their connections to the next chapter (Section 6.6).

**6.1 COURSEBOOKS AS GENRES OF GOVERNANCE**

The use of coursebooks in ELT classrooms is pervasive. They constitute the curriculum of many English language courses worldwide as is the case in this study. Akbari (2008) makes the point that in the EFL context, coursebooks determine the content and methodology of ELT for the majority of teachers. As such, coursebooks can be seen as ‘genres of governance’ (Fairclough, 2003), that is, genres that manage the teaching and learning of English by laying out what should be taught and how. In this first data chapter, I analyse the coursebook *Hemispheres 2* in terms of pragmatics as part of the chain of genres introduced in Section 5.8. *Hemispheres 2* can be seen as a generic device for teaching and learning English, as part of a chain of genres that transform it into the language of teaching English, and then transform it into the language of learning and using English (Fairclough, 2003).

**6.2 HEMISPHERES – A GLOBAL ELT COURSE**

As noted in Chapter Five, *Hemispheres* is a four-level English language coursebook series for adults and young adults spanning high-beginners to upper-intermediate learners. It was published by McGraw-Hill ESL/ELT, a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. in 2008 in New York and printed in Singapore. For each level of the series, there is a student book with audio highlights, a student workbook, a teacher’s manual, an audio CD, a DVD, a DVD workbook, and an EZ Test CD-ROM with Test Generator. These components have been discussed in detail in Chapter Five in relation to the second level of the series, that is, *Hemispheres 2* (see Section 5.2). Of the course components, the student book, teacher’s manual and DVD workbook are in full colour with glossy pages and a visually appealing design. Each level is themed around a colour with the assigned colour featuring as the background for the cover of the associated coursebook materials as well as throughout the associated student book, teacher’s manual and DVD workbook in
heading bars and bolded type-faced headings. The series and each constituent level have a clear and repetitive structure for each of the units and the lessons that comprise them.

According to the coursebook’s copyright information, it is an ‘international edition’ and not available in North America. The labelling of the series as ‘international’ positions the series as a global ELT course (Gray, 2010). While this is the only explicit reference to the intended global audience for the series, there is an implicit reference to a potential global audience in the Acknowledgements section in the preface of the student book. In this section, named reviewers (teachers, program directors, and teacher trainers) from eleven different countries who commented, reviewed and field-tested the book are acknowledged for their contribution to the series. The international reach represented in the acknowledgements is limited to three regions – Asia, Latin America and North America (see Table 6.1). Given that the ‘International Edition’ of the series is not available in North America, only two of the three regions could be seen as representative of the potential ‘global’ audience. Within those two regions, the involvement of 63 schools from across ten countries is noted which raises questions about the implications of the number. Does the high number of involved schools imply rigour and reliability and therefore credibility and trustworthiness? Thailand has the second highest number of reviewing schools represented in the acknowledgements. This implies that Thai considerations factor highly in the design of the series. It is a global course but it has apparent consideration has been given to local contexts by virtue of having been reviewed by schools in countries such as Thailand. The publishers appear interested in making the series applicable to the Thai context, but also for at least nine other countries in different regions. It raises the question of how they are proposing to make the series relevant for localised use in Thailand, and simultaneously relevant for countries like Brazil, Korea or Mexico.
Table 6.1
Regions and countries represented in Hemispheres 2 Acknowledgements section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mexico</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.1 The Hemispheres 2 Coursebook

This section will explore how the global focus of the Hemispheres series is manifested in the coursebook materials of one of its constituent levels, namely Hemispheres 2. As noted in the previous chapter, Hemispheres 2 is the second level of the Hemispheres series and is the focus of this study. To explore the Hemispheres 2 coursebook materials I will be using a framework proposed by McDonough, Shaw, and Masuhara (2012). Their framework proposes investigating coursebooks in two complementary stages: *external evaluation*, or an external overview of the course contents and aims via the cover, introduction and the table of contents; and *internal evaluation*, that is, an in-depth examination of the materials in relation to findings from the external evaluation. In this section, I will describe Hemispheres 2 moving
from external evaluation to internal evaluation. I will then critically discuss the points raised as they relate to globalisation, global English language teaching and learning, and the question of localised English language use.

**External Evaluation**

In conducting an external evaluation of *Hemispheres 2*, I will draw mainly on information found on the coursebook cover and in the coursebook introductory material, as well as through a general overview of the coursebook materials. I will be investigating the authors’ claims with respect to the course’s intended audience, student proficiency level, course aims and objectives, course components, language items, the course layout and organisation, the visual presentations and representations, and cultural and contextual specificity.

Within its anticipated ‘global’ audience, *Hemispheres 2* appears to be aiming to meet the needs of multiple markets. According to its introduction and cover blurb, the target audience of the series are ‘adults and young adults’. There is no indication as to why this distinction has been made, although it implies that these are seen by the writers and/or publishers as different markets and therefore both need to be mentioned explicitly. The course is for those studying General English and for those studying English with academic aims. Though the coursebook description does not to explicitly link *Hemispheres 2* to English for Academic Purposes (EAP), perhaps to avoid over-specifying its market, it is clear that it hopes to appeal to EAP learners in addition to General English language learners. There is a section in each unit of the coursebook dedicated to the Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based test (TOEFL iBT) and the introduction also mentions correlations to the Test of English for international communication (TOEIC) and CEF. CEF is presumably the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) but this is not made clear in the text as CEF is the only terminology used. While there is no explanation of how the course is linked to TOEIC and CEF, the links to TOEFL are made explicit in the introduction. The introduction attempts to argue that the course will meet many of the needs of students intending to take the TOEFL despite a disclaimer included at the bottom of the page in fine print that the coursebook has not been approved by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), the organisation responsible for developing and administering TOEFL and TOEIC. The global realities of English language learning being linked into global standardised tests are
evident in this focus. The course’s apparent attempt to meet the needs of multiple markets raises the question of how one course can meet such diverse and specific needs particularly considering its international focus.

In addition to claiming to meet multiple specific language learning and assessment needs, there is ambiguity around the proficiency level associated with *Hemispheres 2* which arguably also contributes to broadening its market potential. There is no reference to an associated English language proficiency level in any part of the coursebook or associated materials. However, an online brochure from the publisher advertises that the *Hemispheres* series spans high-beginning to high-intermediate. While the brochure does not specifically refer to the proficiency level of *Hemispheres 2*, it could be implied that given there are four levels in the series, level 2 is designed for students at a pre-intermediate level. Nevertheless, the trend is towards generalisation and a lack of specificity around the details which might further identify and distinguish its audience. This feature makes it more appealing to multiple contexts and allegedly easily adapted to different assessment frameworks.

The introduction outlines the features and aims of the series. The features include a balance of language areas; academic and critical thinking skills; TOEFL iBT preparation; vocabulary expansion activities; high interest content; DVD and DVD workbook; a student book with audio highlights; and recycling of content and language. According to the introduction, the focus of the course is on developing language and critical thinking skills. The course is specifically described as ‘putting the skills-building back into the four-skills course’. The authors draw attention to three types of skills – language, critical thinking, and academic skills – presumably to align with their target audience as discussed above. Considerable emphasis is placed on the four macro skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking – and their integration throughout the course. The prominent place given to skills on the cover and in the introduction implies a skills-based curriculum and this is also reflected in the coursebook’s scope and sequence. While a skills-based curriculum is ultimately concerned with what learners do as readers, writers, listeners and speakers, the nominalization of the four macro-skill processes as ‘skills’ positions them as entities without agents subverting their inherent complexity and portrays them as something to be had versus something to be done. Pragmatics is concerned with language in use highlighting that people read, speak, speak and listen in particular contexts. It is
therefore important to consider the role of context in the presentation of skills and skills development in the coursebook. This will be explored further in the internal evaluation.

As with many English language coursebooks, *Hemispheres 2* is designed as a self-contained course with supplementary materials for students and teachers including a workbook, a DVD and a DVD workbook, a teacher’s manual, an audio CD and a CD-ROM test generator. *Hemispheres 2* is distinguished from other levels in the *Hemispheres* series by the colour green, a theme that is carried through each of its components. The scope and sequence outlines 12 core units and four expansion units organised under seven headings - Reading, Listening, Grammar, Vocabulary, Conversation Strategy, Writing, and TOEFL iBT focus. Each core unit has a theme which guides the unit content. *Hemispheres 2* covers the following themes: First Impressions, On the Road, Friends, Time Out, In the News, Why People Buy, Make up your Mind!, On the Edge, Makeovers, Staying in Touch, Making a Difference, and Memories. An expansion unit is placed after each set of three core units and reviews the language presented in those previous three units. In addition to the coursebook’s total of 16 units, the student book has vocabulary expansion activities, a grammar reference section, a vocabulary list for each unit, and a skills index. The teacher’s manual has instructions on how to teach the material in the student book, answer keys for the course activities, expansion activity ideas, and additional information about the unit contents. Separate to the aforementioned coursebook materials, there are interactive web-based revision activities available for *Hemispheres 2*. These provide additional practice around the unit contents and language points and could be utilised by students outside of class providing they have internet access. However, these activities are not mentioned in any of the coursebook materials including the student book. This interactive aspect to the course does not appear to have been finalised at the time of publication. This may have been due to problems in production or it may have been developed post-publication in order to be competitive with a growing market of ELT publications with substantial online components. As Littlejohn (2011) notes, there is an expectation that publishers offer extra supplementary materials, often complementary, in order to compete with other publishers.
In terms of visual material, the coursebook materials contain photographs, illustrations, diagrams, and charts. As mentioned in the previous section, these are in full glossy colour in the student book, teacher’s manual and DVD workbook. The images are for the most part integrated into the text or activity, though students are not always required to comment on the image explicitly. The coursebook has a specific visual layout and structural sequence for each unit that is repeated throughout the book. The repetitive structure of units and lessons within units is a feature that is designed to enhance clarity and comprehension for readers, but could also have restricted the author in terms of how certain material is presented, what is included and what is excluded due to space and design constraints.

One salient feature evident in an external evaluation of *Hemispheres 2* is its cultural bias. While photographs in the coursebook materials represent people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, the material is overwhelmingly Anglo-American centric in terms of its representation of people and contexts and its explicit links to TOEFL. Standard American English accents and language use predominate. The contexts, while not always specified, appear to be mainly about or located within the United States of America. The few international contexts that are mentioned relate to travel or to special interest stories such as a Swiss mountain climber, telemedicine in Antarctica, and WIFI motorcycles in Cambodia. There is no reference in the coursebook content to the Thai context. Considering the course is intending to reach an international market, there are substantial limitations in its representation of international English language users and contexts of use. The assumption is that language use in and about American contexts is relevant worldwide. The coursebook appears to offer a diverse representation of ethnic groups. It could be that students are being invited to recognise themselves in these different ethnicities. However, given the predominant use of Standard American English accents it appears the coursebook is representing the diversity of ethnicities which constitute the United States of America. The perceptions of the students in this study align with this latter interpretation, a point which will be discussed further in Chapter Eight. The limited representation of international contexts and English language users raises questions about how language use is represented in *Hemispheres 2* and is understood by international English language learners studying the course.
**Internal Evaluation**

The internal evaluation of *Hemispheres 2* involves an in-depth examination of the coursebook materials. I will be investigating the treatment and presentation of the skills, the sequencing and grading of the materials, the type of reading, listening, speaking and writing materials contained in the materials, appropriacy of tests and exercises, and self-study provision.

As mentioned in the external evaluation, *Hemispheres 2* has 12 core units and four expansion units. Each core unit is eight pages in length and includes the following sections: Reading and Speaking, Vocabulary, Getting Into Grammar, Activating Grammar, Listening and Speaking, Conversation Strategy, Writing, and Putting It Together. Each section is connected to the unit’s overall theme. The expansions units are four pages long and include a Listening and Conversation section as well as a Reading and Writing section. Each of the four macro-skills appear to be treated equally with a section for each. However, there is a strong emphasis on reading and speaking throughout. Nevertheless, the assumption in looking at the unit layout is that the authors have followed through on their claim regarding skills-building and the integration of skills. Individual sections on the macro skills include a *Skill Focus* which highlights a particular subskill (e.g., identifying causes and effects in a reading activity, or listening to a text for a sequence) which is then practiced in an activity relating to the overall macro-skill. However, the integration of skills is for the most part tailored to the content and language items in the student book and classroom activities. For example, with reading and speaking, the coursebook relies on the reading content to engage learners with the aim of stimulating classroom discussion or linking it to another speaking activity. In this way, the integration of skills has contrived a pedagogical focus rather than providing students with examples of language use where skills are integrated naturally. The coursebook materials make use of the four skills to achieve pedagogical goals in contrast to real-life communication outcomes as they occur in authentic language use beyond the classroom context. The focus aligns with the communicative approach of many current ELT materials that orientate to topics and skills perceived to be relevant and interesting (Gray, 2010).

Language use is classroom-centred and provides limited opportunities to expose learners to language in real life use. Most of the individual sections follow a
presentation, practice, production (PPP) approach which guide students to learn specific language points or items rather than encouraging learners to discover for themselves how English is used in complex ways. Speaking and listening lessons involve artificial dialogues which have been written and performed for learning specific target language or developing particular language skills, but consequently omit fundamental features of real interaction and spontaneous speech such as overlapping, hesitations, pauses, misunderstandings and repairs. Reading and writing texts also appear to have been specifically written and graded for the coursebook highlighting particular grammar, vocabulary and subskills with the aim of facilitating language learning. In addition, the DVD which the introduction claims will show “Conversation Strategies and critical thinking skills in real-life contexts” is scripted and performed by actors using the context of an imaginary internet cafe. The focus throughout the course appears to be on the accuracy of reception and of production rather than on assisting students to use English to achieve successful communicative outcomes in context. The coursebook’s overall approach accords with the view that the classroom, as a social location in its own right, is able to generate its own authenticity for both the content and process of language learning. However, the question remains – are these materials able to help learners use English effectively outside the classroom, particularly those students who are not exposed to English regularly in their everyday lives?

The introduction states that “[n]atural personalisation opportunities features throughout the series” (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. v) and accordingly, there is an attempt to help learners personalise the coursebook material. Students are encouraged to discuss their views and opinions about various topics and some of the activities require students to share information about themselves. For instance, in Unit 3, students are asked to share their opinions about friendship answering questions such as “Do you think your brother or sister can be your best friend?” However, the majority of the activities focus on the language and content of the texts and are designed for specific language and teaching points. In some cases, the personalisation is potentially inappropriate for the sake of the language point in focus such as an activity in Unit 5 which asks students to “share some bad news with your classmates”. The coursebook also assumes particular knowledge and experiences of the world. For example, in Unit 8, a follow-up question to a reading about a free
climber asks students “Are amusement parks and adventure tours safe places for thrill-seeking? Explain” presupposing that students will have experience with and/or knowledge of amusement parks and adventure tours. Further to this point, many of the activities assume that learners are well-educated, middle class, urban, young adults.

With regards to grading and sequencing, it is not immediately apparent what the guiding principle is. There is no explicit discussion of grading and sequencing in any of the coursebook materials other than what is implicit in the organisation of the course. However, with respect to grammar, there appears to be a typical sequencing of forms beginning with simple present and past tenses, moving to future tenses, and with more complex forms such as conditionals, present perfect, and passive voice appearing later in the course, an organisational logic which aligns with a grammatical approach to language teaching and learning (Canale & Swain, 1980). There is also recycling of vocabulary and skills throughout the coursebook which indicate a deliberate sequencing of course units. Within the coursebook units, some sections refer to content in previous sections and in some cases activities are dependent on knowledge of prior content. The Vocabulary section is always linked to the Reading section and some grammar activities also rely on the reading text. The Listening and Speaking, Conversation Strategy, and Writing sections do not depend on knowledge of previous content in the unit, but they are intertextually linked through the unit theme and may recycle key vocabulary.

While it is clear the materials are designed to be used in a classroom, there are features of *Hemispheres 2* which allow for self-study and a certain degree of learner autonomy but this is largely focused on grammatical form, vocabulary, and discrete skills and subskills. There is very little information in the student book or workbook that would allow students to learn how to use language appropriately in context. Learners are told what to say and how to say it. For example, in Unit 7, students are told to “Use the phrases from Activity A to help your partner make a decision”. References to the functions of language are generalised and no consideration is given to the social variables which constrain language use such as the roles and relationships of users and the context in which the language is being used. Some sociopragmatic information is highlighted to the teacher through the Teacher’s Manual through what the authors refer to as Language Notes and Culture Notes. For
example, in the Teacher’s Manual for the Conversation Strategy Starting Conversations, there is a Culture Note titled Breaking the ice which describes strategies for starting a conversation with someone you don’t know.

- You can talk about the weather. (“What a beautiful day!”; It’s hot today, isn’t it?”)
- You can talk about the situation at hand. (In a long line at the supermarket: “This line is really long, isn’t it?”)
- You can hold out your hand and introduce yourself. (“Hi, I’m Margaret”)

(Renn & Cameron, 2008)

The information included in these notes is largely generalised from ‘native speaker’ social norms of English, specifically from an Anglo-American perspective, and does not recognise or account for the diversity of English language use and uses worldwide. For example, the excerpt above describes Western norms for introducing yourself through extending your hand presumably with the intention of shaking the other person’s hand. However, introductions in other contexts would involve different social norms such as in Thailand where introductions would likely involve waiing, bowing with hands pressed together in a prayer like fashion. Moreover, English interactions in contexts such as Thailand are likely to involve participants from different non-English speaking backgrounds.

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, English as a lingua franca (ELF) is the predominant form of English language use worldwide, especially in countries like Thailand where English is a foreign language. Contrary to Hemispheres’ representation of English as homogenous, ELF is a hybridised multicultural and intercultural form of communication. Therefore, as House (2012) has shown, interactions in ELF differ significantly from ‘native speaker’ English talk with respect to discourse and pragmatics. This has implications for the teaching of interaction in English in contexts such as Thailand where ELF use predominates. The above analysis of the Hemispheres series and the Hemispheres 2 course in particular suggest that their materials for the teaching of spoken interaction will not effectively prepare students for ELF communication. The following sections will examine this in more detail exploring how Hemispheres 2 constructs possibilities for the teaching of interaction in English through its Conversation Strategy section.
6.3 THE CONVERSATION STRATEGY SECTION

While speaking activities are present throughout each unit of the Hemispheres 2 course, the teaching of spoken interaction takes place most explicitly in a section of each coursebook unit called ‘Conversation Strategy’ and is therefore the focus of this study. I will explore the Hemispheres 2 Conversation Strategy section drawing on McDonough, Shaw and Masuhara’s (2013) framework as presented in the previous section. I will begin with an external evaluation which will provide a general overview of the section based on the cover, introductory material and the table of contents. I will focus on the section aims and objectives, the coursebook materials which refer to the Conversation Strategy section, the Conversation Strategies included, the section layout and organization, the sequencing and grading of the Conversation Strategies within and across sections, the visual presentation and representations, and cultural and contextual specificity. My aim here is to identify inclusions and exclusions which are key elements in understanding the coursebook’s representations of pragmatics and associated assumptions and values regarding language in use. The internal evaluation will follow. In the internal evaluation, I will be exploring the Conversation Strategies using Verschueren’s (1999) pragmatic perspective as outlined in Chapter Three.

Summarising what was presented in Chapter Three, Verschueren’s (1999) model is concerned with the factors involved in language use, that is, the making of linguistic choices in context. This model is useful because this thesis is interested in English language teaching and the presentation of linguistic choices in context. According to Verschueren (1999), the property of language which enables linguistic choice-making is its adaptability. Inherent in the adaptability of language is the notion that language is both variable and negotiable. An investigation of linguistic adaptability involves four interrelated focal points: context, structure, dynamics and salience (as discussed in Chapter Three). Context encompasses any of the elements of the communicative context with which linguistic choices could interadapt including the physical, social and mental worlds of the users. Structure includes linguistic forms at all levels from phoneme to utterance to extended discourse including principles of structuring such as adjacency pairs. The dynamics of adaptability involves the communication principles and strategies drawn upon to make and negotiate choices in the production and interpretation of language. Finally,
salience refers to users’ processing and awareness of the dynamic interadaptability of context and structure.

My aim in investigating these four interrelated aspects of adaptability is to trace the meaning that is being generated in the Conversation Strategy section in order to make some claims about what is being depicted and what is not being depicted in terms of teaching appropriate, meaningful and useful contextualised language choice. Section 6.4 will then look at the presentation of one Conversation Strategy in detail.

6.3.1 External Evaluation

In examining Hemispheres 2, it is not immediately apparent what the authors mean by Conversation Strategy or what the aim of the Conversation Strategy section is. The implications are that Conversation Strategies exist and that students and teachers will know what Conversation Strategy means. No explicit definitions are provided in any of the coursebook materials. In the preamble of the student book, the Conversation Strategies are described as including ‘useful strategies’. The inference is that the authors intend for the strategies to be useful for its target international audience of English language learners. Beyond this claim, there is no further discussion or explanation of the aims or objectives of the Conversation Strategy section.

The scope and sequence of Hemispheres 2 lists twelve Conversation Strategies with one in each core unit. The following Conversation Strategies are included:

1. Starting conversations
2. Asking about and expressing preferences
3. Agreeing and disagreeing
4. Offering, accepting, and declining invitations
5. Expressing sympathy and concern
6. Hesitating and refusing politely
7. Helping people make decisions
8. Using exclamations to express opinions
9. Asking for and giving clarification
10. Keeping in touch

11. Discussing opinions

12. Correcting and admitting mistakes

These twelve Conversation Strategies are ‘strategies’ that the authors consider to be useful for its international audience. The list of Conversation Strategies included in *Hemispheres 2* appear to be a list of speech acts and/or language functions lending further clarity to the authors intended meaning of Conversation Strategies. As noted in Chapter Two, speech acts are functions realised through language that follow a predictable routine (Austin, 1975; Searle, 1976). As speech acts are situationally-located, the ability to use speech acts effectively involves knowledge of the language required to carry out speech acts and negotiate meaning (or pragmalinguistics), as well as awareness of the social and contextual variables which inform how speech acts are understood and performed (or sociopragmatics). How *Hemispheres 2* addresses these aspects of pragmatics will be explored in the internal evaluation.

The Conversation Strategy section appears in the core units of the Student Coursebook, the Student Workbook, and the Teacher’s Manual. It has an audio component which is available on the teacher’s Audio CD, but not on the student’s audio highlights CD. Therefore, students rely on teachers’ use of the Audio CD in the classroom to hear the accompanying audio files for the Conversation Strategies. According to the introduction, the DVD shows Conversation Strategies in real-life contexts. As discussed in the previous section, the content in the DVD is scripted and performed for the purpose of instruction and does not necessarily reflect real-life use. Moreover, the activities in the DVD workbook have a listening comprehension focus and do not explicitly address the Conversation Strategies. As a result, the use of the Conversation Strategies in the DVD scenarios may not be noticed in utilising these materials unless explicit attention is drawn to them by the teacher. At the school where my study is based, the DVD and DVD workbook are not core materials. They are used at the teachers’ discretion and students do not have individual access to them. The DVD and accompanying workbook activities were not used during any of the classes I observed.
The Conversation Strategy section is the sixth of eight sections in each unit of the student coursebook. It follows the Listening and Speaking section and is followed by the Writing section and the Unit Review section. The Conversation Strategies do not appear to be graded in terms of their order of inclusion across the book. Their sequencing within the coursebook appears to be guided by the thematic link each Conversation Strategy has with other sections of the unit in which it appears. The Conversation Strategy lesson constitutes one page of the eight pages in each unit and is structured in three parts – A, B and C (see for example, Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1. A Conversation Strategy Lesson (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 71)
A heading bar at the top of the page has the title Conversation Strategy followed by a subtitle with the name of the Conversation Strategy that the section focuses on. Part A is what the coursebook calls a ‘conversation model’. It is a conversation dialogue and photograph presenting the language and context associated with the Conversation Strategy. Part B is a pair work activity involving controlled practice of the language presented in part A. Part C presents a group work or role play activity for fluency practice. In parts A, B and C of the Conversation Strategy section, imperative instructions are made followed by an activity. These indicate an instruction/activity structure which is also reflected in the other sections of the coursebook.

Within the Conversation Strategy section, in line with other sections of the coursebook, a presentation, practice, production (PPP) approach is adopted. Language is presented in Part A using a conversation dialogue, and students are encouraged to practise this dialogue substituting the alternative phrases as described above. Part B offers students another controlled practice activity to be done in pairs using what the authors refer to in the introduction as ‘scaffolded dialogues’. Three incomplete dialogues are presented and students are asked to ‘Continue these conversations with a partner’ and to ‘Use the phrases from Activity A’. Part C gives students the opportunity to produce the language they have practiced in Parts A and B in a more open ended group work or role play activity. Parts A and B of the Conversation Strategy lesson offer limited opportunities for students to personalise the content. Personalisation is for the most part limited to choosing which phrases to use in the dialogues presented. The focus in these sections is on controlled practice. The coursebook determines the language use and the conversations in which the language is to be used. Part C offers some opportunities for students to personalise the activity, but these are often constrained by the topics and situations provided.

The visual presentation of the Conversation Strategy section is consistent across each unit. The pages are glossy and in full colour. A green heading bar with the title and subtitle heads the page. The three parts are labelled A, B and C in bolded green with a yellow arrow pointing to the title of each part which is also bolded and in green. As noted previously, the language associated with the Conversation Strategy is presented in a conversation dialogue in part A. The conversation dialogue is presented with a full colour photograph that depicts the context of the conversation.
including the participants and the location. Yellow speech bubbles are directed towards speakers in the accompanying photograph with key phrases/expressions in bold. Speakers are denoted consecutively in the bubbles as letters rather than names. The letters, A, B or C correspond to the order in which they first appear in the dialogue. White boxes overlapping the yellow speech bubbles list ‘the other phrases/expressions’ also in bold. The repetitive structure and visual layout of the Conversation Strategy section aids clarity and comprehension. However, as with the coursebook as a whole, this may have restricted the author in terms of what was included and excluded from the Conversation Strategy section.

The workbook has a corresponding Conversation Strategy section for each unit with a variety of written activities (see for example, Figure 6.2). The written activities include tasks such as unscrambling the target expressions, matching components of the target expressions, categorising the target expressions, and conversation completion tasks. These tasks appear to be geared toward recognising, recalling and producing the correct target language in written form. Some of the conversation completion tasks have an accompanying black and white photograph or line drawing depicting the context of the conversation.

While the Conversation Strategy sections in the student book and workbook represent some diversity in terms of the people included in the conversation dialogue photographs, most of the people depicted are Caucasian and all the accents in the accompanying audio are standard American English accents. In addition, there are no explicit references to locations or identifying features which point to locations outside the United States of America. As *Hemispheres 2* is intended for an international audience, the inference is that the Conversation Strategies, or language functions, presented will be relevant and useful worldwide irrespective of context. The authors appear to be claiming that the Conversation Strategies they present are universal and not dependent on context. This will be explored in further detail in the internal evaluation.
Figure 6.2. Conversation Strategy Workbook Activities (Johannsen, 2008, p. 48)

The Teacher’s Manual provides notes to the teacher relating to each Conversation Strategy (see for example, Figure 6.3). These notes are provided in the form of imperative instructions relating to each activity in the Conversation Strategy section of the student book. The instructions are quite directive outlining exactly
what the teacher should do in each part of the lesson. Eight of the twelve Conversation Strategies include Language or Culture Notes providing sociopragmatic information relating to the particular Conversation Strategy. The Language and Culture Notes are written in an informative style as though it is intended that the teacher read them out in class, though this is not specified in any of the materials. It could also be that the Language and Culture Notes are written for non-native speaker teachers who may not be familiar with particular norms of language use. The inclusion of these Language and Culture Notes underscores that the different expressions that are assigned to the various Conversation Strategies are socially and culturally constrained. The assumption is that the social norms that are presented in these notes are universally agreed upon and will be applicable and relevant to the context in which they are being taught and learned.

**Figure 6.3.** Teacher’s manual notes (Renn & Cameron, 2008, p. T71)

In terms of self-study, the phrases and expressions presented in each Conversation Strategy section allow students to build a phrase bank of potentially
useful language functions. The phrases are presented in context which is aimed at easing comprehension for students and as such can be used independently as a reference for self-study. Yet, the student coursebook and workbook do not appear to provide any information about the appropriate use of phrases in different contexts with different social variables operating. This information appears to be restricted to the Teacher’s Manual. Moreover, the audio highlights that accompany the student book do not have recordings of the conversation dialogue used to model the Conversation Strategy. Therefore, in terms of self-study, students are restricted to being able to learn the phrases associated with Conversation Strategies without being able to access the audio recording. In addition to showing how phrases and key words are pronounced, the audio recording may provide students with additional contextual information about how the target phrases might be used effectively in communication.

6.3.2 Internal Evaluation

In this section, I will discuss the representation of language in use as it appears in the Conversation Strategy sections of Hemispheres 2 in terms of four aspects – structure, context, dynamics and salience (Verschueren, 1999). I am investigating these four aspects in order to construct a coherent critical pragmatic description and explanation of the linguistic choices and their potential effects made in the Hemispheres 2 coursebook with respect to the teaching of spoken interaction (or Conversation Strategies). To examine the four aspects I charted the structural objects and contextual variables presented in the Conversation Strategy section across each of the conversation models and associated activities. The findings will be presented accordingly in the sections that follow.

**Representing Structure in interaction**

This section will examine the structural objects of linguistic adaptability. Following Verschueren’s (1999) framework, the structural objects include any element of linguistic form that might contribute to meaning making from phoneme to discourse. Given the multimodal nature of the Hemispheres 2 coursebook, structural objects also include the audio files and images that accompany the written text in the Conversation Strategy section.
Each Conversation Strategy is presented in a conversation dialogue. Conversation dialogues in coursebooks are a particular genre distinguished by their tendency to be scripted, performed, incomplete and inauthentic; often representing particular functional exponents within a fabricated context or situation that is depicted in an accompanying photograph or picture. In the Conversation Strategy section of *Hemispheres 2*, a conversation dialogue is included in the first of the three sections which constitute the lesson (see for example, Figure 6.4). The dialogue is presented with a photograph depicting the context of the conversation. The dialogues are artificially scripted and performed by actors in an accompanying audio. They are presented as incomplete and inauthentic in that they include only a particular fragment of conversation and rarely include features of spontaneous speech such as fillers, pauses, or hesitations. This serves a pedagogical purpose of aiding comprehension and focusing attention. The phrases associated with the Conversation Strategy are highlighted in bold in the conversation dialogue and alternative expressions are provided in overlapping boxes.

![Conversation Dialogue](image)

*Figure 6.4. A Conversation Dialogue (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 63)*

Each conversation dialogue is presented by the authors as a statement of fact in what is a knower-initiated knowledge exchange (Fairclough, 2003). Readers are
instructed by the authors to listen and practice the conversation dialogue and then practise again using the other phrases. The authors’ absence from the text reflects their academic authority positioning them as unquestioned experts. While the conversation dialogue offers linguistic choices, readers are not explicitly asked to choose, only to ‘use the other phrases’. The introduction to Hemispheres 2 sets up how the other phrases are to be used, that is, substituted into the conversation model. The assumption, based on the student coursebook and workbook, is that they can be inserted into the conversation dialogue without modification or concern regarding any contextual factors which may or may not constrain their use.

Each Conversation Strategy is intertextually linked in terms of the overall structure of each lesson and the general structure of the conversation dialogues which present the Conversation Strategy. There is a logic of equivalence set up in which Conversation Strategies are equated to a set of corresponding phrases. For each lesson, a Conversation Strategy is named (e.g. Helping People Make Decisions) and this exists as an umbrella term for sets of phrases presented in the conversation dialogue. These phrases are presented as equivalent, co-hyponyms, that is, co-members of a superordinate class which is in this case, the particular Conversation Strategy in focus. In this way, each Conversation Strategy is constructed as being dependent upon knowledge of particular phrases. The phrases in focus are highlighted in a conversation dialogue through bolding and the colour green. The visual modality achieved through bolding and the use of colour represents a high level of obligation for the reader in terms of focus. Relations of equivalence are set up between those phrases and alternative phrases that are presented adjacent to the conversation dialogue boxes in white boxes. Their equivalence is achieved visually through the use of bolding and the colour green, as well as the close placement of the alternative phrases in relation to the phrases in the conversation. The aim of this logic is to bracket any differences in order to present homogenously what is classified as the Conversation Strategy in question. This is in part a pedagogical decision which aims to aid comprehension for readers who are learning English as a foreign language. However, there are also pedagogical ramifications. The relation of equivalence allows the discourse on what constitutes successful spoken interaction to adopt the use of particular phrases, or Conversation Strategies, without acknowledging the pragmatic variables that constrain their use. The logic of
equivalence sets up the process of internalisation and preserves the hegemonic status of linguistic forms (pragmalinguistics) over pragmatic variables (sociopragmatics) within English language teaching.

This is reinforced in the follow-up activities in the student book and workbook. The activities consist of conversation fragments in which the target phrases are to be used (see for example, Figure 6.5). Students are instructed to use the phrases from the conversation model in activity A of the student book’s Conversation Strategy section or are given the phrases to use in the workbook activities.

**B Pair work.** Continue these conversations with a partner. Use the phrases from Activity A to help your partner make a decision. Then switch roles.

1. A: I was thinking about getting a car, but I don’t know if I should get a new car or a used one. On the one hand...  
   B: Have you considered...  
   A:...

2. A: I was considering moving to...  
   B:...

3. A: I want to take a night class, but there are so many to choose from.  
   B:...

*Figure 6.5. Student book Conversation Strategy activity (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 63)*

The phrases that form the focus of the Conversation Strategy section are what Coulmas (1981) refers to as conversational routines. Conversational routines consist of prefabricated phrases or expressions that are put to use in a commonly recognised and generally accepted manner within a given speech community (Coulmas, 1981). In the field of second language learning, formulaic phrases and expressions such as these are considered an important aspect of fluency and strategic competence (Bachman, 1990; Canale, 1983; Celce-Murcia, 2007; Hymes, 1972). They reduce the cognitive processing load for producing and interpreting utterances in interactions. However, as Coulmas (1981) asserts, because conversational routines are used in particular contexts with the aim of achieving particular communicative goals, the various contexts and situations in which conversational routines may be used need to be accounted for. The following section on “Representing Context” will explore the extent to which *Hemispheres* 2 has considered these contextual features.

Structurally, each conversation dialogue and follow up activity in the student coursebook and workbook establishes one or more discourse topic. The conversation fragments cover a diverse range of topics and situations including parties, sport, shopping, travel, friendship, movies, concerts, cafes, iPods, computers, pets, cars,
classes, overseas study, and appearance. The discourse topics connote particular lifestyles characterized by shared consumer behaviours, leisure activities, attitudes to certain social issues, as well as individual choices (Machin & Van Leeuwen, 2005). The topic choices appear to have been constrained by the coursebook design to ensure the content of each section is linked to the overall theme for the unit. This sometimes means that there is a lack of connection between the Conversation Strategy in focus and the topics chosen to practice the language associated with the Conversation Strategy. For example, in Unit 9, the Conversation Strategy ‘Asking For and Giving Clarification’ offers the following dialogue prompt for students to practice the language presented:

A: I just bought a new outfit for the party tonight.

B:...

B is supposed to respond using one of the following phrases from the conversation model in Activity A: “Could you be more specific?” “Could you give me an example of what you mean?” “I’m not exactly sure what you mean.” “What exactly do you mean by that?” While the phrases are useful, particularly for English language learners, they cannot be usefully applied to the situation presented. The appropriacy of the Conversation Strategy to the situation is overlooked to ensure the connection between the situation and the unit theme of Makeovers is maintained. Furthermore, some of the topics chosen for the conversation dialogues and follow-up activities may not be familiar or relevant to all international readers, such as adopting a dog, airplane seat preferences, or bungee jumping. While many of the topics are general, or relate to the assumed common classroom experience of the readers, many of the situations take for granted that learners are well-educated, middle class, urban, young adults with associated values and experiences.

In terms of style, the formulaic phrases presented in the conversation models for each Conversation Strategy vary in formality and directness. However, the relative formality and directness of the phrases is not addressed at all in the student book and rarely in the teacher’s manual. Despite the absence of sociopragmatic information in the student book or teacher’s manual, one of the workbook activities for one Conversation Strategy, Offering, Accepting, and Declining Invitations, asks students to distinguish between formal and informal expressions (see Figure 6.6).
The assumption here is that students will be able to distinguish between formal and informal forms without explicit instruction.

**CONVERSATION STRATEGY** Offering, Accepting, and Declining Invitations

A → **Identify.** Complete the chart with the expressions from the box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal</th>
<th>Formal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That's so nice of you to offer.</td>
<td>Maybe another time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you guys like to come?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you care to join us?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm not available that night.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sure we'll come!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maybe another time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'd be delighted to!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wish I could.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 6.6. A workbook activity for *Offering, Accepting and Declining Invitations* (Johannsen, 2008, p. 24)*

As mentioned previously, the Teacher’s Manual adds Language or Culture Notes for some Conversation Strategies describing social norms which may influence the choice of particular phrases for particular situations. However, the Teacher’s Manual describes these social norms as universally applicable and there is no discussion of their possible variation. Furthermore, students’ access to this information is dependent on the teacher. The teacher must first choose to refer to the Teacher’s Manual to access this information and secondly to include the information about social variables that constrain the use of Conversation Strategies in the lessons they teach. I will be exploring this further in the next chapter.

Images accompany activities in the Conversation Strategy section in both the student book and workbook. As previously mentioned, all of the conversation models in the student book include full colour photographs and some of the conversation activities in the workbook are accompanied by black and white photographs or line drawings. Each image represents a narrative process of participants in interaction. In the student book, this is made more salient through the use of speech bubbles connecting the participants to their speech. The represented participants do not meet the gaze of the viewer, and in this way do not demand anything of the viewer. Instead, the images offer information to the viewer about the context and type of interaction taking place. The images of represented participants are all medium shot taken from a predominantly eye-level perspective allowing the viewer to be removed...
from the interactions but still within reach of the situations depicted. Accordingly, the viewer is placed in a position of detached observation of the interaction. In the student book, the conversation models are composed along the dimensions of centre and margin with the photograph occupying the centre and the speech of the participants occupying the margins. This representation depicts the photograph as central to understanding the written text in the margins. Similarly, the workbook images make use of the horizontal axis and for the most part present the images on the left and the text on the right. The assumption is that the images will be information the viewer already knows or can relate to in order to make sense of the text (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). The images therefore play a critical role in making meaning of the conversations. The images relay information about where the interaction is taking place; who is talking including their gender and age group; the status and relationships of the people talking; and the relative formality of the conversation. However, the meaning that is generated depends on the viewer and may lead to different interpretations of the Conversation Strategy.

**Representing Context**

In this section, I am interested in exploring how the interrelated contextual variables inherent in linguistic choice are represented in the Conversation Strategy models and associated activities. The analysis focuses on the language users that are represented; the mental, social and physical worlds that are invoked; the linguistic channel; and linguistic context (Verschueren, 1999). These variables were investigated across the 117 conversation fragments presented in the Conversation Strategy sections of the *Hemispheres 2* coursebook including the conversation models and the accompanying activities.

Investigating contextual variables across each of the conversation fragments revealed that overall there is very little contextual information provided in the Conversation Strategy section. The contextual variables situating the conversations are most evident in the conversation fragments where a photograph or image depicts the context in which the interaction is taking place. 29 of the 117 conversation fragments have accompanying images. In the student book, photographs accompany activity A but do not accompany activities B and C. The conversation model in activity A has the most contextual information and the activities in B and C have fewer contextual features. As noted in the external evaluation, activities B and C
provide opportunities for students to practice and produce the language presented in activity A. While a general place or situation is specified in activities B and C, contextual variables such as gender, ethnicity, social relationships, social status and age are rarely provided (see for example, Figure 6.7). The absence of these variables is most conspicuous in the role-play activity where it is generally expected that students will assume a ‘role’ (McDonough, Shaw, and Masuhara, 2013). As in the example below, the roles that students are expected to take are not made explicit.

**C ▶ Role-play.** Work with a partner. Choose three topics from this list and role-play three conversations about decisions that you are trying to make. Use phrases for helping people make decisions. Switch roles.

- which classes to take
- whether or not to attend an event
- whether or not to take / quit a job
- whether or not to buy something
- whether or not to get married
- whether or not to start / end a relationship
- what to wear to an event
- your idea: __________________

*Figure 6.7. A student book activity for the Conversation Strategy Helping People Make Decisions (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 63)*

This may be a design feature of the coursebook to attempt to make the activities applicable to as broad an audience as possible. The intention may be to allow students to practise or use the target language creating their own ‘roles’ for the conversation, although they are not instructed by the coursebook to do so. Furthermore, there are no explanations given in the student book with respect to the applicability of the various linguistic choices presented in activity A to different roles and relationships. Because these contextual variables are not mentioned or discussed, the assumption is that those variables do not have an impact on the linguistic choices made in language use. The overall shape within the Student book’s Conversation Strategy section is to become less contextualised allowing the coursebook to be more ‘global’ in reach, but simultaneously suggesting that language use is not influenced by certain contextual variables.

As the scaffolding around the depiction of context within the Conversation Strategy section in the student book lessens, the role of the teacher becomes increasingly important. While teachers are not instructed in the Teacher’s Manual to provide additional contextual information in terms of social roles and relationships, do they address this in the classroom activities? Do they specify a role and relationship for the activity and if so, do they discuss the appropriate use of the target
language with respect to the various roles and relationships students may take on? These are questions that will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Of the 117 conversation fragments or prompts, 103 involve two participants. 10 involve three participants and the remaining four do not specify the number of participants. The predominantly dyadic representation of conversation could be a reflection of how the authors view most conversation. It may also be to simplify the presentation of the target language. The conversations that involve three participants do so to illustrate the target language such as in the Conversation Strategy offering, accepting and declining an invitation. One participant offers an invitation, one participant accepts the invitation and the third declines. The prominent use of dyadic interactions in the Conversation Strategy sections also allows for the use of the conversation fragments in pair work activities. Pair work activities are a prominent feature of each Conversation Strategy section of the coursebook. In contrast to larger group activities, pair work activities maximise talking time for the speakers involved and simplifies the turn-taking for students who may be cognitively occupied with remembering the target language. However, these kinds of pair work activities do not reflect the complexity of authentic interaction and as such may be limited in their relevance for students using English outside the classroom.

In the conversation fragments, language users are referred to in three ways: as letters A, B or C; with names; or as roles. In each of the twelve conversation models, the language users are denoted as A, B or C according to their turn in the conversation even when they are visually represented in an accompanying photograph. Except when photographs depict otherwise, the labelling of speakers as A and B subsumes differences such as gender, ethnicity or status that might be signalled by the use of names. This could be a strategy by the authors to make sure the coursebook content is applicable to as broad an audience as possible. However, this also has the effect of subverting any differences in language use that might occur due to gender, ethnicity or status. In this way, language use is presented as homogenous and as independent of the language user.

In one conversation model, A and B labels are given to the participants and identifying names are used in the conversation dialogue. In this example, names are used as terms of address and are an important element of the conversation. While several of the workbook activities use the labels of A, B and C, some of the activities
use names to label the participants in the conversation dialogues. Where names are used, they are all Western Anglo names such as Ed, Al, Sarah, Pattie, and Mr Smith. Language users being represented by Western Anglo names implies that they are from Western Anglo backgrounds. The only explicit representation of language users who are not from Western Anglo backgrounds is when the reader or their classmate is assigned one of the speaking roles labelled as ‘you’ or ‘your classmate’. This occurs in a total of 14 of the 117 conversation fragments.

There are also several language users labelled according to their role or relationship to the other speaker such as friend, student, teacher, customer, and salesperson. These labels invoke particular relationships with associated social norms of language use. When such labels are used, they either illustrate a particular type of interaction such as transactions or they provide a generic context for the conversation fragment. However, the relationships between language users invoked in the labels are not presented as having an effect on the language choices that are provided for each Conversation Strategy. Each phrase is presented as being substitutable in the conversations providing it fits within the conversation’s overall structure. Language use is for the most part presented as universally applicable irrespective of the participants and any role or relationship they may have.

Across each Conversation Strategy, almost all the language users portrayed in the conversations are adults. Although it is difficult to make accurate statements about the age of the participants depicted in the accompanying images, it is possible to state that the majority of images feature language users who might be referred to as young adults. The predominant featuring of young adults is in line with the specific emphasis placed on young adults as the target audience in the coursebook’s introduction.

Gender is specified in 40 of the 117 conversation fragments including all twelve of the conversation models (see Table 6.2). In terms of gender relations, there are 23 interactions where both males and females are represented as involved in the conversation. Of those 23 interactions, 15 are initiated by males. In the dyadic conversations between males and females, 10 interactions are initiated by males and 4 are initiated by females. The implication is that conversations involving males and females are mostly initiated by males.
Table 6.2

*Gender representation in the Conversation Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>No. of Interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/M</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/F</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/M</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/M or F</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/F/M</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/F/F</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/M/F</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/F/M</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/F/F</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/M/M</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/F/F/M</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The coursebook appears to be presenting the idea that this is how gender relations are done. Given that gender and gender relations are culturally situated, is this reflecting the diverse notions of gender and associated relationships of the coursebook’s global audience? On the other hand, the majority of conversation fragments do not specify gender suggesting that the language use being represented is not affected by gender or gender relations. Furthermore, instances of language use are not represented as being specific to a particular gender or constrained by gender. Yet, as will be shown in the Conversation Strategy *Starting Conversations* (see Section 6.4), the representation of gender relations can be problematic and may be more salient than
the target language detracting from the pedagogical intent of the Conversation Strategy.

In terms of social relationships between language users, the Conversation Strategy section mainly depicts informal and close relationships either through images, labels or the content of the conversations. In seven of the twelve Conversation Strategy models, the language users appear to be friends. In three of the remaining five contexts depicted, the language users are strangers who appear to be of equal status. The other two conversations are transactional interactions where the language users are portrayed as service providers and customers. Overall, talk is predominantly represented as interactional as opposed to transactional and the focus is on informal talk between friends. This may be an audience design feature. However, the conversation models do not represent the diverse contexts in which language is used or the various social roles and relationships which shape and are shaped by linguistic choice. In the follow up activities, there is a greater variety of social relationships represented in the various conversation fragments including friends, family, salesperson/customer, student/teacher, and work colleagues. However, these are not represented as shaping or being shaped by linguistic choice.

The predominant social relationship invoked in the follow-up activities is that of the classmates perceived by the coursebook authors as participating in an English language course using the coursebook (see for example, Figure 6.8).

**Group work.** Invite people in your class to these events. Then accept or decline your classmates’ invitations.

- a movie
- a party
- a concert
- a sports event

**your idea:**

*Figure 6.8. A student book activity from the Conversation Strategy Offering, Accepting and Declining Invitations (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 35)*

In this way, the target language can be put to use in activities designed for the classroom. This may be a design strategy to provide a common ground for interpreting and applying the conversation fragments in the various contexts around the world in which they might be used. It could also be a way of making the target language more meaningful to students by situating it in an ‘authentic’ context that students share. However, different social relationships may be invoked between classmates based on contextual variables such as age, gender, status or ethnicity.
which the coursebook does not account for. Given that the coursebook does not address these variables explicitly, students are not able to make linguistic choices accordingly. The implication is that all the linguistic choices given would be equally applicable.

In addition to social relationships and identities, the social worlds of the language users are invoked in the social settings that are represented. The social settings include parties, retail stores, various forms of transport, cafés, movies, sports events, schools, universities, the classroom, and workplaces. The majority of the social settings are informal and connote a middle class lifestyle. These settings have been chosen for the coursebook’s global audience and are therefore considered applicable to this demographic. The implication is that the choices of social settings included in this Conversation Strategy section will be relevant to the demographic using this book to learn English. The coursebook has been heavily investigated in Thailand according to their acknowledgements, so it raises the question of whether these settings are relevant to students learning English in Thailand.

While the conversations are set in a variety of locations including cafes, universities, retail outlets, and homes, the physical contexts depicted are generic and could be applied to a variety of geographical locations. Roughly half of the follow-up activities in the student book’s Conversation Strategy sections do not specify a location for the conversation depicted. When a location is specified it is mostly the classroom in which the activity is being conducted that is indexed. In all of the Conversation Strategy photographs, the locations are either blurred or cropped removing any identifying features. Instead, it is the interaction that is foregrounded implying that the conversation could be taking place anywhere and that the location would not necessarily impact the nature of the conversation. This could be another aspect of the coursebook’s design increasing its applicability to a wide variety of global contexts. However, the predominant featuring of Caucasian American English speaking language users means that the generic locations of the interactions are more likely to be assigned to an American context.

The primary channel of communication that is depicted in the Conversation Strategy section is face to face interaction. Though it isn’t always specified, face to face interaction is depicted in accompanying images and invoked in the instructions for classroom activities. The coursebook uses the written channel presenting
conversations in transcript form. An audio file accompanies each of the 12 conversation models, but, as mentioned previously, the students do not have direct access to the audio files. This means that features of conversation that contribute to meaning such as intonation and stress are backgrounded.

As Hemispheres 2 is an English language learning textbook, each of the conversation fragments is situated in a pedagogical activity. These activities are the linguistic context within which the conversation fragment is made to mean in the classroom context. The instructions which introduce the activity constrain how the readers engage with the text and what they do with the language being presented. In the student book, the instructions follow a similar format and form across each Conversation Strategy. The instructions for activity A are to “Listen and Practice. Then practice again using the other phrases.” The terms ‘phrases’ and ‘expressions’ appear to be used interchangeably across the Conversation Strategies. The instructions for the pair work in activity B begin with “Continue these conversations with a partner. Use the expressions from Activity A to….” The instructions for activity C vary according to the group work or role play activity, but all begin with an imperative such as invite, share, use, or work. Implicit in the authors’ instructions (demand) is their commitment to obligation/necessity. The highest level of obligation/necessity is evident through a lack of modality in the wording reflecting a high degree of requirement on behalf of the reader. The implicit ‘you’ in the instructions appears to be the student. No references are made to the teacher. As mentioned previously, the authors are backgrounded in line with the authority of academic voice. In terms of lexical choice, the verbs are the most salient elements of the instructions – listen, practice, use, continue along with the objects being the phrases, the expressions, the conversation. Prominence is given to the activities and objects and to the persons carrying them out and not to the persons giving the instructions nor the social relations/institutional forms. The implicit message is that the authority of the book need not be questioned. The writers construct themselves as experts and the knowledge they are presenting as unequivocal. The readers are not asked to question or engage with the text other than to listen, practice and use.

The inclusion of a context through a photograph in the presentation of each Conversation Strategy indicates that there is a recognition that language use happens in context. As there is no discussion of how this context shapes and is shaped by
language use, its primary purpose appears to be pedagogical, helping students to make meaning of the dialogue that is presented. At the same time, there appear to be efforts to decontextualise the dialogues. The represented social actors in the dialogues are often not named, but instead classified generically as A, B or C according to their turns in the conversation. In addition, there are no references to specific geographical locations. This could be a strategy to facilitate the ‘localisation’ of Conversation Strategies within international markets, or may be a way of reducing overt references to culture in response to concerns over cultural imperialism.

**Representing Dynamics in interaction**

According to Verschueren’s (1999) pragmatic perspective, the processes involved in the dynamic generation of meaning in language use are evident in the relationship between structurally identifiable choices and the properties and influences of context. Because the representation of contextual variables in the coursebook is limited or otherwise targeted toward a particular demographic, we have little sense of how context and structure are interadaptable, and the representation of dynamics is consequently compromised. According to Verschueren (1999, p. 170), dynamics involves frames of meaning which draw on ‘interpreted’ speech activities or speech events, as well as “the use of strategies of language use which exploit the interplay between explicitness and implicitness in the generation of meaning”. I will look at these two aspects of dynamics in turn.

In terms of frames of meaning, the various conversation fragments do not include adequate contextual variables to specify particular speech activities or events. In this way, the frames of meaning are open to broad interpretation, a feature which allows for adaptability to a variety of contexts but which without specification or explanation may result in their misinterpretation. It is the instructions which provide the linguistic context for each conversation fragment along with the visual structuring and bolding of particular language that suggest the predominant intended frame of meaning for each conversation fragment is pedagogic. When the frames of meaning are made more explicit, as in the conversation models where more contextual variables are present, the assumption appears to be that the pedagogical frame will predominate. However, as will be seen in the Conversation Strategy example of *Starting Conversations*, the context in which a conversation is presented may lead to alternate, more salient meanings being made. While the potential for
misinterpretation of the pedagogical intent may be seen, for some, as justification for
decontextualizing language use, I would argue, given the central role of context in
meaning making, that it underscores the importance of contextualizing language
appropriately. In terms of teaching English as a foreign language, contextualizing
language appropriately would mean choosing contextual situations from the various
global contexts in which English is being used.

As to the second aspect of dynamics, the language users in the interactions are
represented as drawing on a variety of strategies in the dynamic generation of
meaning. The various phrases promoted in each conversation model differ in terms
of their explicitness and as such represent different communicative strategies.

As Figure 6.9 shows, some phrases are direct such as “Do you want to come?”
and some are indirect such as “Are you free?”. Some expressions are quite literal in
their meaning such as “I’m not available that night”, while others are more idiomatic
as in “I’m afraid I can’t”. However, because the target expressions are represented as
interchangeable sets of exponents in one conversation dialogue, they are always

Figure 6.9. The Conversation Strategy Offering, Accepting, and Declining Invitations (Cameron,
Renn, et al., 2008, p. 35)
represented as having the same perlocutionary effect. In everyday conversation, language users exploit explicitness in interactions for varying purposes including to adapt to particular social settings and social relationships. However, this feature of interaction is never explicitly acknowledged in the coursebook. Consequently, students are not given the opportunity to see how various phrases could be used to achieve different effects or how they might be used appropriately within different social settings or relationships.

**Representing Salience in interaction**

While dynamics refers to the processes involved in meaning generation, salience is concerned with how the processing works, that is, the status of the meaning making processes in the minds of the language users. Following Vygotsky (1978), the mind is understood as ‘mind in society’. As Verschueren (1999) asserts, the making of linguistic choices is a mental activity, but one which is always situated in a context, with participants, requiring language users to be able to flexibly employ socially constrained principles and strategies.

Briefly, whatever social correlates there are to language they are always cognitively processed to have any influence at all on linguistic behaviour. What is more, those social factors do not exist without being interpreted, i.e. cognitively processed (sometimes cognitively produced). Conversely, abstract cognition, without any social embedding, does not exist. (Verschueren, 1999, p. 175)

Salience is the cognitive work that is involved in the dynamic generation of meaning in interaction, where context and the different social roles and relationships of participants come into play. Salience involves perception and representation, planning, and memory. In terms of perception and representation, as the language users depicted in *Hemispheres 2* do not exist, the conversation fragments cannot reflect representations of their perceived realities as such. Instead what they reflect are representations of the imagined realities of the authors. What we see is a manifestation of how the authors perceive and represent particular communicative events. As discussed previously, the representation is limited to three or four turns, decontextualized, and oriented toward form presumably with an imagined English language learner reader in mind. Particular Conversation Strategies are included in the coursebook and are named or labelled with the implication that these categories
are salient to the authors. These Conversation Strategies are further categorised into phrases or expressions. Sets of phrases are presented as equivalent in meaning despite varying in formality and idiomaticity. The Conversation Strategies and phrases are repeatedly associated with particular verbs which are ‘use, listen, practice, and continue’. The categorisations and associations of the Conversation Strategies are presented as fixed. The implication is that the coursebook’s representations of language use will be understood and shared by the reader. The extent to which this is the case in this study will be explored in the data analysis of the teachers’ and students’ perspectives in the following data chapters. The conversation models refer to and highlight particular linguistic choices to enact Conversation Strategies. It raises the question, why these choices? Why not other choices? A simple answer may be the space constraints of the coursebook. However, the production choices of the authors and publishers have to be understood in terms of what is most salient to them in terms of their imagined readership.

A second process involved in salience is planning. While the language use being represented in the coursebook is presented as being in real time face-to-face, the coursebook’s representation of planning processes does not appear to correspond with everyday interaction. To begin with, in real time face-to-face conversation, planning and the execution of plans in terms of linguistic choices happens almost simultaneously resulting in false starts, pauses, hesitations, and the need for repair. Yet, as we have seen, the conversation fragments in the coursebook do not include these aspects of language use. Secondly, planning in language use relies on the use of scripts, or mental representations of speech activity or event types, in both production and interpretation. Language in use is produced and interpreted based on knowledge and anticipation of particular scripts. Given that the coursebook only partially represents event types, the scripts that the language users in the coursebook are represented as drawing on in their interactions are open to broad interpretation by readers and these interpretations could vary significantly. As with dynamics, it is the script associated with the pedagogic task and its accomplishment that appears to be the most intact and this could be seen as the representative of the coursebook authors’ intention. However, readers as interpreters draw on their own knowledge of scripts to make meaning of the language use presented with whatever information is given. Apart from the pedagogic script referred to above, it is not clear which scripts,
and associated speech activity or event types, the coursebook authors expect readers
to draw on in order to make sense of the conversation fragments.

Memory, taking the form of recognition or of recall, is central to language use
(Verschueren, 1999). Recognition is the ability to spontaneously interpret and give
meaning to an object based on the language user’s experience or knowledge, while
recall involves an active effort to bring information or an event back from memory.
Everyday interaction of the kind represented in the coursebook Conversation
Strategies relies mostly on recognition with the aid of categorization schemes and
scripts. However, readers of the coursebook as English language learners can only
partially rely on recognition. For the most part, they need to use active recall and this
appears to be the goal of the coursebook activities. Crucially, however, memory is
interpretive, guided in part by what is socially important. Given the limited
representation and explanation of the social variables inherent in language use,
students are limited in their ability to make linguistic choices that most accurately
reflect their social purposes.

The cognitive processes associated with producing and interpreting language
choices happen at varying degrees of salience, or consciousness in the minds of
language users. Some choices are highly salient while others are not conscious at all.
At an individual level, prior knowledge will determine what is noticed and therefore
more salient to a language user. However, an individual’s prior knowledge is socially
determined. In interaction, social norms create patterns of markedness. Language
functions which are more marked will be more clearly noticed and hence more
salient. However, the assumption in the coursebook appears to be that social norms
and associated patterns of markedness are universal across language groups and
cultures. It is expected that what is ‘marked’ in one language community will be
‘marked’ in another and that the corresponding social norms will be equivalent. The
lack of explicit discussion about social norms in the coursebook could mean that
students misinterpret or miss vital information in the Conversation Strategies because
the particular functions are not marked in the same way in their own cultures. For
learners of English as a Foreign language, the assumption appears to be that the
social norms of the American English presented in the coursebook will be
understood and taken up unproblematically.
While salience cannot be measured per se, aspects of salience can be traced. A process central to salience which leaves observable traces is metapragmatic awareness, that is, “the utterer’s and the interpreter’s reflexive awareness of the choices made when using language” (Verschueren, 1999, p. 186). These traces of reflexivity can be observed in shifters, or indexical symbols such as personal pronouns, tense, or modality, which move in relation to changes in the context of use. Other traces include pragmatic markers, such as adverbs or markers of cohesion and coherence, and contextualization cues such as back-channelling or code-switching. Within the conversation fragments, there are several indicators of the metapragmatic awareness of the model language users. Though, as with the other cognitive processes, the metapragmatic awareness of the depicted language users only exists in the minds of the authors. While indicators of metapragmatic awareness appear in the conversation fragments, it appears that their metapragmatic function is not highlighted in the coursebook or discussed in the teacher’s manual. In some instances the metapragmatic function of the indicators are rendered moot as they are presented as being equivalent to other phrases or expressions that do not share the same function. Some indicators of metapragmatic awareness are not represented at all such as back-channel cues and code-switching.

**Summary**

In investigating the coursebook’s representation of structure, context, dynamics, and salience, what we see is an orientation toward the linguistic, a tendency to decontextualize conversation dialogues, and a corresponding lack of clarity around dynamics and salience. The following section will explore these pragmatic elements in relation to the conversation model for one Conversation Strategy to further explicate the issues raised in this section.

### 6.4 PRAGMATICS IN THE CONVERSATION STRATEGY STARTING CONVERSATIONS

The previous section has shown how pragmatics is presented in the Conversation Strategy section of *Hemispheres 2* looking at the elements of structure, context, dynamics and salience. This section will look at structure, context, dynamics and salience in the conversation model of the Conversation Strategy Starting Conversations. It is a Conversation Strategy that exemplifies the absence of
pragmatic considerations explicating the issues that have been raised in the foregoing section.

The Conversation Strategy lesson on Starting Conversations is in the first unit of Hemispheres 2. The Conversation Strategy is thematically linked to the unit which is titled First Impressions. The lesson comprises two full pages in the students’ materials – one full colour page in the student book and one greyscale page in the workbook (See Appendices A and B). The teacher’s materials include an accompanying audio file for the conversation model in the student book, a full page of instructions for the student book, and an answer key for the workbook (see Appendices C and D).

As noted in the previous section, Starting Conversations is a Conversation Strategy in which pragmatic considerations are, for the most part, absent. The reference to pragmatics is to a particular language function, that of Starting Conversations. The pedagogical purpose of the text is to represent the Conversation Strategy Starting Conversations. The focus of my analysis will be the conversation model in activity A of the student book which presents the Conversation Strategy. The conversation model builds meaning about what constitutes Starting Conversations through a series of semantic and grammatical relations established through the written text and accompanying photograph. These relations will be explored within the areas of context, structure, dynamics and salience.

As noted previously, the target language for the Conversation Strategy lesson is presented in a conversation model with an accompanying photograph. The conversation model for Starting Conversations is a fragment of a conversation between two young adults, a male and a female referred to as A and B respectively (see Figure 6.10).
Figure 6.10. The Conversation Strategy Starting Conversations (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 7)

Drawing on the photograph and written text, A and B are talking face-to-face on a couch in a mutual friend’s living room at a party the friend is hosting. The participants are sitting next to each other on the couch in very close proximity and are making eye contact. The male’s posture is open and he appears to have his arm around the woman. The woman has her legs crossed and her hands clasped around her knees. Their close proxemics indicates a high level of intimacy connoting a close established relationship. This raises the question of why the man would need to ‘start a conversation’ with the woman. However, according to the conversation, the man and woman appear to be meeting for the first time. Returning to the photograph and given the dialogue, the man’s open-legged posture, gaze, and body language all connote propositioning. While the woman is holding the man’s gaze, she does not mirror his open posture and her shoulder is raised away from him signalling that the man’s proposition may not be welcome.

The general activity context and the social relationship between the two participants imply that conversational fragment is intertextually linked with several wider circles of communication including being invited to a party, accepting the
invitation, arriving at the party, and possibly talking with other people. There is also
the matter of how the man’s arm has become positioned around the woman. In order
for the conversation to take place, neither participant would have been visibly
involved in another conversation. It is also unlikely that the conversation would
abruptly come to an end after the fourth utterance. The main body of the
conversation is probably still to come. The content of the conversation is linked to
their common experience of the party and their mutual friend. The linguistic context
of the fragment links the conversation to a particular language learning activity that
of listening to and practicing the conversation model, then practicing again using the
other phrases. Visually, the phrases are enhanced and therefore salient in relation to
the rest of the conversation. The language activity is part of a series of language
learning activities in a unit titled First Impressions. The Conversation Strategy lesson
is linked to the other lessons in terms of theme. The Listening and Speaking activity
preceding the Conversation Strategy lesson uses the target language from the
Conversation Strategy lesson though no explicit attention is drawn to it. Within the
Conversation Strategy lesson, the activities which follow the conversation model
draw on the target language that is presented in the model and in this way the
conversation model is a key element of the lesson.

The conversation model is an example of a conversational opening in line with
the target Conversation Strategy of starting conversations. In structural terms, the
conversation model is a cluster of utterances, the style of which ranges in formality.
There are utterances which are quite informal (e.g. Wow…!) and those which could
be used in more formal interactions (e.g. So tell me…). There are three sets of
phrases, the first of which is a set of hedges. The second set introduces exclamations
and the third set includes discourse markers that signal a desire to ask a question. The
sequencing of the conversation is organised by the occurrence of two adjacency
pairs. The male initiates the conversation with propositional content regarding the
party which also functions as an invitation to talk. The female responds in agreement
taking up his invitation to talk. The male then continues the conversation by asking a
question which the female answers. The conversation fragment ends with the female
asking a question of the male which would be presumably answered as the
conversation continued. In terms of the preference organization of the talk, the
responses are all preferred alternatives. The invitation to talk is accepted, not
declined. The question is answered and the implicit invitation to continue talking is taken up. However, were A to be female and B to be male, the utterances could be spoken equally well. Linguistically, there is nothing in either set of utterances that refers to the gender of the person speaking. It is the context as depicted in the photograph that assigns gender to the language users and contributes to the construction of meaning around gender relations in the conversation dialogue.

In the conversation dialogue, there are three sets of interchangeable phrases all subsumed under the umbrella of *Starting Conversations*. As with all the Conversation Strategy dialogues, there is a logic of equivalence established within each set of phrases through the use of bolding and the colour green. The implication is that Starting Conversations is done in a relatively predictable and routine way. The first set of phrases are hedges and they are followed in the conversation by a declarative statement about the party both A and B are attending. The phrases ‘It seems like’, ‘It looks like’, and ‘Apparently’ modify the speaker’s commitment to the truth of the statement he is making about the party. The inference here is that the hearer may not agree with the statement and so the speaker is modifying his assertion. In the context of starting a conversation, this could be seen as a strategy for facilitating cooperation in the conversation. The second set of phrases, in A’s second sentence, introduces exclamations about the number of people at the party. The statement is declarative without any modification indicating a high commitment to truth. A logic of equivalence is set up between the first and second sentence in which a successful party is equated with lots of people. The second sentence operates as evidence of the truth of the first sentence signalling a preferred response of agreement by B. In terms of the Conversation Strategy *Starting Conversations*, the second set of phrases function as comments by A about a shared context or experience implicitly inviting B to respond. Moreover, these phrases are presented as part of an exclamation that expresses the speaker’s surprise or excitement, an expression of emotion that signals A’s intention for B to respond cooperatively.

The illocutionary force of A’s first two sentences is to indirectly invite B to talk, a potentially face-threatening act. The implicit nature of the invitation in conjunction with the use of a hedge and an exclamation acts to lessen the threat. However, in representing *Starting Conversations* as an indirect speech act, the intention of the speaker is not made explicit and is potentially ambiguous. The
assumption is that an indirect approach to inviting someone to talk will be universally understood, relevant, and applicable in various contexts. In the conversation model, B responds cooperatively by agreeing with A’s statements about the party, and thereby accepting his invitation to talk. Implicit in the conversation model is that B will be cooperative. There is no explicit discussion in the student book or workbook of dispreferred responses to the invitation to talk despite the context in which it is presented where a dispreferred response may be warranted or necessary.

The third set of phrases is a set of discourse markers realised in differing grammatical forms which signal the speaker’s intention that the hearer listen and respond to the question that follows. ‘So tell me’, ‘Let me ask you something’, ‘I’m just curious.’, and ‘So’ are used to introduce the question ‘how do you know Lisa?’.

In the conversation dialogue, they function as a way of A continuing the conversation. Similar to the first two statements by A, the question is a reference to their shared experience or background. Furthermore, because B has already referred to Lisa, the question has cohesion within the conversation. While the phrases function as a way of continuing the conversation, they could equally be used to start a conversation and that is how the Conversation Strategy is presented. However, three of the four phrases are dependent on the following sentence being interrogative rather than declarative and this is not made explicit. Furthermore, the use of interrogatives in starting a conversation is a more direct invitation reflecting a higher degree of obligation for B to respond. In addition, the use of imperatives in ‘So tell me’ and ‘Let me ask you something’ strengthen the degree of obligation on the part of B and may not be appropriate in an opening statement. Equally, while ‘I’m just curious’ is not imperative, there is an implicit demand to satisfy the speaker’s curiosity by responding to the question. The taking up of the conversation by B following A’s initial statements in his first turn means that the use of the phrases in his second turn is less threatening to B. Nonetheless, the variation in the directness and the contextual appropriacy of the third set of phrases is not addressed. It is inferred that these nuances will be understood and successfully applied to conversation outside the classroom.

B responds to A’s question by offering another preferred response, an answer to his question, signalling that she has accepted his invitation to continue the
conversation. The conversation dialogue ends with her asking A the same question he asked her in his second turn. In this way, the conversation is incomplete. This highlights the pedagogical focus of the conversation, namely the phrases associated with starting conversations.

In addition to the functions and pragmatic nuances of the phrases shown in the conversation dialogue, there is an assumption that students will understand how to apply the phrases accurately in new sentences. The expectation is that students will know or notice that ‘It seems like’, ‘It looks like’, ‘Apparently’ is and should be followed by a subject verb, object construction, or that teachers will teach it. Furthermore, there is no discussion of possible different constructions such as “It looks like rain” or how a different construction may not be accurate or appropriate such as “It seems like rain” or “It seems like fun”. The second set of phrases raises similar grammatical concerns. ‘Wow, there are lots of’ and ‘There are so many’ are used with countable nouns. The assumption is that students will know how to change the phrases to agree with uncountable nouns, or that teachers will teach this. There appear to be a number of pedagogical points to be highlighted in this particular Conversation Strategy. Given that the pedagogical focus appears to be the phrases associated with the Conversation Strategy, any additional instruction will need to be provided by the teacher. Whether pragmatics is prioritised is dependent on the teacher and this will be discussed further in the next chapter in relation to the teachers in this study.

What happens with meaning in the conversation model? For the reader, the frames of meaning in which the conversation model has to be interpreted is given by the activities or events defined in terms of the above ingredients: first, a language learning activity presenting language for starting conversations and second, an informal conversation between two strangers at a party in which the male appears to be propositioning the female. In the context of the instructions for the language learning activity, the conversation is to be interpreted as supplying useful information about starting conversations. However, drawing on the context of the conversation, the Conversation Strategy takes on the meaning of a proposition. It appears that in starting conversations with strangers it is completely appropriate for a male to have his arm around the woman he is talking to and to be seated closely to each other and that this would not be contested by the woman. The preferred
responses of the female in the conversation connote acceptance of the situation even though her body language may suggest otherwise. What if the speaking roles were reversed? Would the woman be propositioning? While it may be difficult to imagine the roles reversed in terms of the photograph, it is unlikely that this would change the meaning derived from the context. The photograph chosen to illustrate the Conversation Strategy blurs the meaning of the conversation and undermines the pedagogic intent of the Conversation Strategy lesson.

As noted previously, the main objective of including the photograph with conversation dialogue appears to be to provide assistance to students in making meaning of the dialogue through depicting its context. The implicit claim is that the context is clear and common enough to readers to draw on as background knowledge to make meaning of the dialogue. There is a presupposition that parties are contexts where people want to start conversations with strangers. However, the sexually charged nature of the context in which the conversation model is placed may not reflect the social and cultural values of all language learners blurring the intention of the Conversation Strategy and limiting its applicability and generalisability. The coursebook instructs students to Listen and Practice the dialogue. There is no instruction to discuss the multiple meanings that could be derived from the context or to examine the way in which the contextual variables might influence language choice. The assumption is that the phrases presented in the dialogue will be equally applicable regardless of the context. It also raises questions as to whether the contextual variables are salient to the readers and if so, what effect it has on the teaching and learning of this particular Conversation Strategy. This will be discussed in the following two chapters which look at teacher and student perspectives.

6.5 DISCUSSION

Implicit in the term ‘Conversation Strategy’ is the notion that people apply strategies to ‘create conversations’ regardless of specific context. Yet the features of everyday conversation suggest that conversation is often unplanned and subject to contextual adaptation depending on the situation and the roles and relationships of the speakers involved. The Conversation Strategies presented in the coursebook Conversation Strategy lessons do not show this. Instead they conflate the use of particular conventional expressions with achieving a particular communicative goal irrespective of context. The literature on pragmatics represents it as complex and
multifaceted (Verschueren, 1999; Mey, 2001). The coursebook however represents the highly complex concept of pragmatics reductively as a set of presumably interchangeable phrases without due consideration of the social variables which constrain language use or a sense of the complexity of meaning construction. The Conversation Strategies are presented as existing independent of their agents when it is social agents and their roles and relationships in a particular context that constrain and determine how language can be used. The omission of social considerations in the presentation of language in use in *Hemispheres* 2 may have significant ramifications for students who aim to successfully use English in the future.

Overall, the findings show that the teaching of Conversation Strategies through *Hemispheres* 2 is highly structured with clear pedagogical aims. The structure within each Conversation Strategy section follows a Presentation, Practice, Production (PPP) approach which is an established format that is followed in other coursebooks (Nitta & Gardner, 2005). The linguistic features that are being promoted are conversational routines or formulaic language chunks. This reflects a belief that lexical chunks will be useful for second language learners. Coulmas (1981) argues that formulaic language requires less cognitive effort and is an important part of fluency. However, Coulmas (1981) also makes the point that while conversational routines often have agreed conventional readings for members of particular speech communities, for second language learners the meanings of these routines need to be interpreted by inference. The assumption by the coursebook appears to be that the inferred meanings will be made by the students unproblematically or, in the few cases where the coursebook deems necessary, mediated by the teachers. Yet, given the idiomatic nature of many conversational routines, how can students infer their social meaning without explicit consideration of the cultural knowledge which is being implicitly negotiated in these interactions in the real world? The likelihood of misinterpreting the meaning of particular phrases and their use could be quite high. Furthermore, given that the formulaic expressions used in the coursebook vary in formality with very little in the way of explicit explanations as to how, the consequences of misconstruing the use of various expressions could be quite serious. For example, if you needed to decline an offer of food your boss has made because you don’t like what they are offering, using the phrases “I’m not crazy about”, “I’m not wild about...” and “I’m not big on...” could sound rude depending on your
relationship with your boss and how you said the phrases. Equally, your boss’ use of the above phrases may be an important signifier of their communicative style and how he or she wants to construct their workplace relationships.

The contextual variables presented in the coursebook are often limited to a situation without any specification around place, ethnicity, nationality, gender. There is very little indexing of particular social roles, relationships, or settings. When these contextual variables appear, they are heavily oriented toward Anglo-American contexts through for example the use of Western names such as Lisa, Dan, and Mrs. Smith, as well as Standard American English lexis and accents. The discourse topics, the sites used to contextualize the language use, while coherent within the related coursebook unit, are overwhelmingly lifestyle situations that are quite representative of the middle class such as spending time in cafes, going to the movies, going bungee jumping, or flying in an airplane.

What we are seeing here in Hemispheres 2 in the teaching of Conversation Strategies are the influences and imperatives around the global market. As Littlejohn (2012, p. 284) argues:

> Although materials are aimed at use inside a classroom, they will always bear the hallmarks of the conditions of their production outside the classroom. This is particularly the case with materials which are produced in a commercial context, where the needs to maximise sales, satisfy shareholders, and achieve corporate goals may have a direct impact on the design of materials, quite distinct from their pedagogic content.

In terms of context, we see the specificities written out of the coursebook and we see generics instead. We see that linguistic choices are formulaic conversational routines presented as exponents of particular language functions or speech acts with the implications that they will all be appropriate everywhere. The presumed universal appropriateness of various Conversation Strategies is mitigated later in some of the teacher data which shows the teachers not actually teaching some Conversation Strategies or particular expressions within a Conversation Strategy lesson. Then we see pedagogically the approach in the coursebook replicates very much an inductive presentation as part of an overall PPP approach with graded practice moving from form-focused out to role-plays and open-ended group-work activities with very little contextualisation. However, because the coursebook has very little contextual
information, it is unable to capture the realistic dynamic interplay between the people who are interacting. As a result, the coursebook appears heavily oriented toward the linguistic. Particular linguistic choices have been made in the form of the Conversation Strategies themselves and the formulaic target language that is shown to constitute them. Certain Conversation Strategies and formulaic expressions have been included which appear to be salient to the coursebook authors. However, when we look at the Conversation Strategies that have been chosen, it raises the question, why these?

While *Hemispheres* clearly intends to target an international audience, a close examination of the course reveals that it has not considered the global nature of English language use or the predominant use of English as a lingua franca. English is presented as homogenous, as Standard American English with corresponding homogenous social norms, cultural values and identities. English language use is represented by American ‘native speaker’ voices on the accompanying audio file and by American English lexical choices within the conversation fragments. Despite international consultation, the few references to international contexts and people in *Hemispheres* relate primarily to travel or special interest stories. Language use is for the most part artificially constructed for the purpose of the course’s language and teaching points which focus on skills development and knowledge of particular grammatical forms. Very little consideration has been given to the social and cultural variables which constrain language use in various contexts. Where consideration has been given, social norms are presented as universal. Consider Table 6.1 at the beginning of this chapter where I specify the particularity of target EFL contexts such as Thailand, Costa Rica, and Brazil. Where are these contexts in the coursebook? The coursebook is instead providing an idealized ‘native speaker’ representation of English language use outside the classroom and does not appear to offer an adequate opportunity for students to learn how to use English appropriately in communication.

6.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has investigated English language in use, that is, pragmatics, as it is represented in a global English coursebook and its supplementary materials. It examines *Hemispheres* 2 as a whole in the context of the broader *Hemispheres* series. It then goes on to look at the Conversation Strategy section of the coursebook
in light of pragmatics drawing on Verschueren’s (1999) pragmatic perspective. The analysis explores four interrelated pragmatic concepts – structure, context, dynamics and salience – across all Conversation Strategy sections of *Hemispheres 2*. It then analyses the conversation model for the Conversation Strategy *Starting Conversations* in detail drawing on the same four pragmatic concepts to further explicate the overall pragmatic analysis.

The analysis found that:

- the coursebook adopts a presentation, practice, production pedagogical approach to teach English language in use;
- there is a linguistic emphasis on conversational routines;
- the coursebook represents language in use in generic and mostly decontextualised situations;
- contextual features of English language in use in the coursebook are often limited to a situation without any specification around variables such as place, ethnicity, nationality, and gender;
- where contextual variables exist, they are often representative of Anglo-American language use as reflected in the exclusive use of Western names and Standard American English spelling;
- there is a tendency in the coursebook toward discourse topics which are representative of young, middle class lifestyles;
- the representation of the dynamics of English language in use is impoverished;
- and while it appears that the coursebook’s pedagogical focus is what the authors intend to be most salient, the meaning that is made of English language in use in the coursebook is open to broad interpretation and possible misunderstanding.

These findings are the foundation of the following two chapters which will discuss the teachers and students accounts of English language in use as it is presented in *Hemispheres 2*, as it is taught and practised in the classroom, and as it is employed by students beyond the classroom.
In this second data chapter I examine how teachers in an EFL context of a Thai English language school represent and interpret global ELT coursebook materials to teach the pragmatic features of English. While the previous chapter was concerned with the particularities of the coursebook, this chapter is about the teachers’ engagement with the coursebook in terms of what is taught, what is not, and what is adapted and how. The coursebook is a pervasive and important part of practice in the school as it constitutes the curriculum in a school setting marked by teacher mobility and student transience. The coursebook provides stability and constitutes the core curriculum. For the teachers who are all native English speakers and non-natives of Thailand, the coursebook is central to their teaching practice. For this reason their engagement with the coursebook constitutes a major part of their teaching and the input that they provide to students. I make the case that in teaching the coursebook content, the teachers are involved in recontextualising the coursebook.

Chapter Six explored how pragmatics is represented in a Global ELT coursebook and associated materials. The analysis showed that the coursebook tends to represent interactional language in use with a linguistic focus and with very little emphasis if any on pragmatics, where pragmatics is defined as a perspective on language that takes account of the meaningful (i.e., cognitive, social, and cultural) functioning of language (Verschueren, 1999). There is a tendency to decontextualise language in use rather than show the dynamic interplay between linguistic structure and context that takes place in everyday interaction. Indeed, the business of pragmatics as represented in journals such as the *Journal of Pragmatics* and *Intercultural Pragmatics*, which centres on features of language in interaction usage such as politeness and the negotiation of meaning, is not mentioned in *Hemispheres* 2. Rather, politeness is reduced to formal and informal modal verb use without any explicit mention of politeness and the negotiation of meaning is reduced to sets of static responses in adjacency pairs.

In this chapter I follow Fairclough’s (2001, 2003) method of descriptive analysis, moving towards interpretative and explanatory analysis. This method
allows me as researcher to move from the descriptive data that was generated through the teacher interviews and the observations of classroom interactions to claims about the constraints and affordances in the teaching of pragmatics through global ELT coursebook materials in a Thai EFL context. To analyse the data in this chapter I drew on Fairclough’s (2003) recontextualising principles. As outlined in Chapter Three, the notion of recontextualisation enables insight into the movement and transformation of discourses across social practices. This was of particular relevance in terms of identifying the practices and values at work in the teaching of pragmatics through the coursebook as it was enacted in teachers’ classroom practices. In this study, the meaning of pragmatics in the Conversation Strategy section of *Hemispheres 2* is transformed as it is taught by particular teachers, in different classrooms with different English language learners. What is included and excluded by teachers in recontextualising the coursebook as a genre of governance is a critical element in understanding teacher agency, and their knowledge and skills with respect to pragmatics. Analysis can enable insights into what is eliminated; what is valued in the teachers’ recontextualisation of the coursebook in their teaching practices.

The chapter begins with an examination of the institutional guidelines and prevalent practices associated with the teaching of *Hemispheres 2* (Section 7.1). This is followed by an exploration of teachers’ interview talk in terms of their perceptions of English language in use and decision making with respect to the Conversation Strategies in *Hemispheres 2* (Section 7.2). I then shift the focus to the teachers’ classroom interactions and address the questions arising from the previous chapter around the teaching of pragmatics (Section 7.3). Finally, I discuss the findings in light of the overall research problem (Section 7.4) and then conclude the chapter in Section 7.5.

### 7.1 *HEMISPHERES 2* – INSTITUTIONAL GUIDELINES AND TEACHERS’ PREVALENT PRACTICES

In this section, I present the institutional guidelines for the use of coursebooks in the Bangkok English Language School (BELS). *Hemispheres 2*, as I mentioned in Chapter Five, is the mandated coursebook at the school for students studying Levels Nine through Twelve. BELS mandates that the teachers use *Hemispheres 2* across four six-week terms beginning in level nine and finishing the coursebook at the end
of level 12. The curriculum for each level is pinned on notice boards in the staff room and stipulates the coursebook units to be taught for each level. Each six-week term typically consists of 12 lessons lasting two and a half hours totalling 30 hours for the term. Each term covers three core units from *Hemispheres 2*. In general, teachers allot four two-and-a-half hour classes to a unit with an average of two pages of the coursebook being taught per lesson. One of the participating teachers in this study, Owen, breaks down his teaching of the coursebook section on Conversation Strategies in the following way:

Like if this, we’re talking this book in particular, we typically teach two pages per class, two and a half hours so I spend an hour on this, maybe not but if you break it up in an hour a page or so.

(Owen: Interview, 10/12/12)

Following the highly generic structure and ordering of *Hemispheres 2*, the teachers tended to divide up the coursebook in a predictable way and this seemed to be consistent across the teachers’ six week terms in this study. For example, *Hemispheres 2* in level 9 at BELS was generally implemented across the six week term in the following way:

Table 7.1
*Implementing Hemispheres 2 in Level 9 at BELS*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Institutional Organisation of the Coursebook</th>
<th>Hemispheres 2 Coursebook Unit</th>
<th>Skill and/or Language Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lesson 1</td>
<td>Unit 1</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
<td>Unit 1</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
<td>Unit 1</td>
<td>Listening and Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson 4</td>
<td>Unit 1</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
<td>Unit 2</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson 6</td>
<td>Unit 2</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lesson 7</td>
<td>Unit 2</td>
<td>Listening and Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson 8</td>
<td>Unit 2</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lesson 9</td>
<td>Unit 3</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson 10</td>
<td>Unit 3</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, the school does not prescribe this format. The school mandates that the teachers teach the three units that correspond with the level they are teaching, for example, Units one, two and three for Level 9. Yet, teachers are able to adapt or omit lessons, or change the sequence of lessons within a term. What they choose to highlight or skip is up to them. Of interest is the consistency with which the teachers in this study followed the sequencing of *Hemispheres 2*, highlighting the determining influence of the coursebook in organising their teaching. The progression of the coursebook appears to determine how the teachers implement it in their classes. I have accessed and generated data from five teachers in order to look at the decisions they make with respect to the coursebook materials. Given the focus of this study on pragmatics and the teaching of pragmatics, how much emphasis do they give to the Conversation Strategies? What do they choose of what is recommended by the school? What do they ignore and for what reasons? These are questions that will be discussed further in the following sections.

Despite having some flexibility in terms of how the coursebook is taught, it is generally expected by the school’s administration that teachers will use the Student Book as the core curriculum for each term. As noted earlier in this section, a document displayed on a notice board in the staff room specifies the coursebook and units that are to be taught in each level. BELS assigns levels to teachers the week before the term starts. At the beginning of each term, teachers are given audio CDs that correspond with the levels they are teaching which includes audio files for the coursebook units they are expected to teach. In addition, every student is expected to purchase a copy of the student book and workbook for their level.

The institutional guidelines for coursebook use are introduced through a system of mentoring. More experienced teachers at the school mentor new teachers and it is in the mentoring sessions that institutional considerations and requirements are passed on. The mentoring involves a new teacher meeting with their mentor two or three times a week in their first term to discuss their lesson plans and be given ideas for teaching particular parts of the coursebook. From my general observations of
these sessions in the staff areas, the student book is the core resource for mentoring sessions and any supplementary activities that are suggested or discussed relate back to the main teaching points in the student book. Teachers are able to supplement or substitute the material in the student book with activities and ideas from the teacher’s manual, the audio CD, the workbook, the DVD and associated workbook, or other resources. As noted above, teachers have some flexibility in what exactly they teach and how they go about teaching it. The pedagogical choices made by teachers specifically in relation to the Conversation Strategy section will now be explored.

7.2 TEACHERS’ VIEWS AND DECISION MAKING: RECONTEXTUALISING HEMISPHERES 2 FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

In this section, I look at the teacher interview data in terms of the teachers’ engagement with Hemispheres 2, specifically the Conversation Strategy section. A key element of teaching is that of mediation, moving meaning from one social practice or event (or text) to another (Fairclough, 2003). According to Fairclough (2003), the ability to manipulate or direct processes of mediation is a key element of power. As such, teachers and their decision making play a considerable role in English language education.

I organise the section according to Fairclough’s (2003) notions of exclusion and inclusion which are important aspects of the filtering process that occurs with recontextualisation. I elucidate which elements are excluded and included in moving from the coursebook to the classroom teaching. As noted in the previous section, teachers had some flexibility in their ability to choose which elements of the coursebook they would include and exclude in teaching each level. In this section, I present the views that the teachers expressed to me about the Conversation Strategy section in our interviews that underpin their decision making. Commensurate with CDA (Fairclough, 2001), my analysis of the teachers’ views and decision making includes description, interpretation, and explanation.

The teachers’ respective classes are listed below in Table 7.2 below. Table 7.2 also outlines the associated Conversation Strategies for each level and then delineates the Conversation Strategies that were taught and not taught from the available selection.
Table 7.2
*The Conversation Strategies taught and not taught*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Class time</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Available Conversation Strategies</th>
<th>Conversation Strategies Taught</th>
<th>Conversation Strategies NOT Taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>1 – Starting Conversations, 2 – Asking About and Expressing Preferences, 3 – Agreeing and Disagreeing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Matt</td>
<td>1 – Starting Conversations, 2 – Asking About and Expressing Preferences, 3 – Agreeing and Disagreeing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>4 – Offering, Accepting and Declining Invitations, 5 – Expressing Sympathy and Concern, 6 – Hesitating and Refusing Politely</td>
<td>4, 5, 6</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>7 – Helping People Make Decisions, 8 – Using Exclamations to Express Opinions, 9 – Asking for and Giving Clarification</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>10 – Keeping in touch, 11 – Discussing Opinions, 12 – Correcting and Admitting Mistakes</td>
<td>10, 11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In examining the teacher interview data, several consistent themes emerged from the interview transcripts. I collected the teachers’ comments regarding the conversation strategies from the interview transcripts and distilled the recurring themes into a table. Appendix G shows an example of the “off-stage” preliminary
process of coding the teachers’ comments in an excerpt of a teacher’s interview. The themes that are apparent in the interview data relate to three categories as shown in Table 7.3: 1) the teachers’ overall orientations to the Conversation Strategies, 2) their reasons for not teaching particular Conversation Strategies, and 3) their approaches to teaching the Conversation Strategies. The key lexical and grammatical items used by the teachers to represent their views and decision making with respect to the Conversation Strategies are outlined in Table 7.3. These items are of interest because they constitute and construct the discourses and meanings in the teachers’ accounts of the Conversation Strategies and their teaching of them. Table 7.3 shows descriptive analysis which demonstrates the saliency of particular parts of the Conversation Strategies informing the teachers’ decision-making.

While Zoe, Emily and Michael appeared to see some value in the Conversation Strategies (see 1a in Table 7.3), the teachers’ views were mostly consistent in terms of their negativity towards the Conversation Strategies (see 1b in Table 7.3). Several teachers said that they did not agree with the language choices in the Conversation Strategies. For example, Zoe noted that it was not the kind of language she thought was important. Matt and Owen said that they thought the Conversation Strategies had too many options. Emily commented that the Conversation Strategies do not always sound natural and are sometimes confusing. Owen, Matt and Michael each commented on the Conversation Strategies’ limited cultural relevance. The teachers’ lexical and grammatical choices with respect to the Conversation Strategies were predominantly negative, pointing to a lack of clarity regarding the overall pedagogical purpose and appropriacy of the Conversation Strategies within the Coursebook curriculum.

From the descriptive analysis, I now move to interpretive analysis where I explore the macro-themes evident in the teacher interview data. I explicate the findings in terms of interpretations through Verschueren (1999) with annotations from Table 7.3. In analysing the teachers’ views and pedagogical decision making in the interview data, five macro-themes emerged that are of particular relevance to this study and its focus on the teaching of pragmatics. These macro-themes are: cultural essentialism, deficit views of students, making linguistic generalisations, a native speaker normative model of English language use, and the dominance of grammar. Following Table 7.3, I discuss each macro-theme in turn.
### Table 7.3

*Teachers’ Views of the Conversation Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Interview Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Orientations to the Conversation Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Negative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2. Reasons for not teaching the Conversation Strategies |
| a. Perceived cultural relevance |
| b. The coursebook’s language choices |
| c. The coursebook’s use of context |
| d. Pedagogical considerations |

| 3. Teaching the Conversation Strategies |
| a. Explaining pragmatic differences |
| b. English language model |
Well, Conversation Strategies like high frequency grammar and high frequency language, for instance “Excuse me, pardon, I didn’t catch that”, it gives you an easy gateway into the language. (Zoe)

…it does make conversation easier and we do use those phrases a lot - some of them. Some of them don't make sense, if you just heard them, so they need to be taught. (Emily)

I have seen students use bits and pieces of these conversation strategies outside of the classroom, out on the street… with other people. (Michael)

I think a lot of them are unnatural and there’s too many options. (Owen)

We’re throwing… like 15 new phrases at them in one day. It’s a little too much in my opinion. (Matt)

Just have the grammar exercises involving preferences… not a conversation strategy on it. (Matt)

It’s not necessarily the language that I would like to teach them or at least the kind of language that I think is important(Zoe)

Yeah, to a close friend, I wouldn’t necessarily say “I’m afraid I can’t”, “I’m not available”… nobody speaks like that. It’s not real language… it’s so formalised and it’s a formula of speaking. (Zoe)

The grammar section is ‘present continuous’ and then in the conversation strategy, it’s not about present continuous at all. It’s about “Excuse me, pardon me, can you repeat that?” So like that really confused me. (Zoe)

I think what is missing is people using it naturally. I think it feels very - but then it is, it's performed dialogue, so it's very performed. But - so you're not actually hearing a real conversation with it being used. Then it - that also makes it hard for me to teach the - an actual - I feel like I'm teaching phrases and not actual conversation. (Emily)

Like agreeing and disagreeing, well from a cultural standpoint, Thais don’t like to disagree. So teaching that is really hard. I usually skip it. They can agree all day long, but their familiarity with disagreeing is being quiet. (Matt)

I don’t need to do it. I mean how many of my students have conversations with people on airplanes? (Matt)

I would not talk to my friend “Well apparently this party is a big success” (Owen)

Because that conversation, it seems so stilted. Like “sure should I bring something?” “Oh no, don’t bother.” Who says that? (Zoe)

I think they're bad. They just don't make sense. Or sometimes I think - sometimes I look at it and I think this will be really confusing for them, and it won't be beneficial. It's confusing for me. I have a hard time figuring out things. (Emily)

Well like shoot me an email. That's foreign to me, shoot me an email. Again, I'd say, because shoot usually implies violence or a gun or something. So we avoid that word. (Michael)

I don’t think you’d ever see two Thai students sitting that close together. (Owen)

I just think a lot of them are not Thai related at all. (Owen)

Most of them don’t give you anything to discuss. They just say “Hey, how are you doing tonight?” and then what are you supposed to talk about. (Matt)

I feel like we need to work more on the grammar. (Emily)

… one of the difficulties here is I am teaching at testing level… and I have only a limited number of hours in which to teach verb forms that may be tested on the testing level. So I'm compelled to meet those objectives. Plus we've had a holiday... (Michael)

Just shorten down to reality and there are slight you know there’s nuances to each phrase. But if you’re stuck trying to explain those... (Owen)

Usually I don’t go with them because it’s teacher talk and stuff and maybe 1%, 1 out of 10 or 15 kids will get it, the rest will just be looking at you with blank faces so... (Owen)

I always have to explain different... like which ones are polite, which ones are not polite. (Matt)

…I can't go into like everything that doesn't make sense. Some of those I just will either tell the student “Don't… Just don't use that” “We're focussing on these” and then you know I like highlight those. Then sometimes if I think it's a phrase that people use commonly, then I address it and explain which sometimes takes a while and can be confusing. But if I think it's important, then I'll take the time. (Emily)

There's usually one element or - at least one element in every Conversation Strategy that I have to say “look, this is bullshit. This is just not the way we talk in English.” (Michael)

“Well, who the hell - what do you mean, “Is that you?” We understand, “Is that you?” Thai people will not understand that. (Michael)

It's based on my experience - I lived two years in Australia. It's based on my experience in Canada, time I spent in the United States, time I spent in England, time I've spent in Australia. Just Western - Western… (Michael)

Yes, or I would say that - no, I'd say ‘we' - I would not say ‘I'. I would say ‘we'. We don't talk like that. These are not the expressions we use in English. (Michael)
Cultural essentialism

The role of culture, in particular cultural relevance, in teachers’ decision making and views is strongly apparent in the teachers’ talk about the Conversation Strategies. Several teachers in the study draw on their perceptions of Thai culture and their own cultural background to draw conclusions as to what will be relevant to Thai students learning English. However, the teachers’ views regarding cultural relevance seem to be informed by predominantly essentialist views of culture. For example, Matt’s comment that ‘Thais don’t like to disagree’ (see 2a in Table 7.3) not only reflects an essentialist view of Thai culture, but also positions Matt as an authority on Thai culture. Owen’s comment that the Conversation Strategy contexts are ‘not Thai related at all’ (see 2c in Table 7.3) reflects similar views to Matt as does Michael’s comment regarding the coursebook’s language choices when he says ‘this is just not the way we talk in English’ (see 3a in Table 7.3). These three examples are reflected in various ways throughout the teachers’ interview talk and raises questions of how the teachers came to their understandings of culture, whether their students share their views, and if they have discussed their cultural perspectives with their students. Notably absent from the teachers’ talk is any evidence of more nuanced understandings of culture commensurate with the definitions of culture outlined in Chapter Two of this thesis. As Verschueren (1999, p92) argues, “a truly pragmatic approach to linguistic behaviour does not place social variability at the level of idealised groups, but along a range of intersecting dimensions contributing to interlocutors’ social identities.” By essentialising culture, the teachers in this study disregarded the various social identities of their students as well as the diverse factors that contribute to their students’ language choices.

Deficit views of students

Another dominant theme in teachers’ talk about Conversation Strategies are teachers’ views of students. Overwhelmingly, these views position students as lacking. In the above comments regarding teaching, Owen expresses concern with having to do explanations or what he calls ‘teacher talk’ (see 3a in Table 7.3). He justifies his concerns drawing on a belief that students will not be able to understand his explanations. Owen’s comments disregard the students’ agency in making meaning of his teacher talk and reflect limiting views of his students. The assumption that students will not be able to understand or take on new information regarding
language and/or culture is also evident in the comments made by Matt and Michael (see 2a and 3a in Table 7.3). The dynamic generation of meaning in interaction, including interactions between teachers and students, involves production and interpretation choices that are informed by the physical, social, and mental worlds of the interlocutors (Verschueren, 1999). Students in their roles as interpreters and producers of English draw on diverse physical, social and mental worlds which do not appear to be acknowledged by the teachers in this study. How the students in the study actually take up the linguistic and cultural elements of English through the Conversation Strategies will be explored further in the next chapter.

**Generalising English language use**

The teachers in the study make the point that many of the phrases in the Conversation Strategies are not phrases they themselves would use questioning the inclusion of particular phrases in the coursebook and justifying the teachers’ decisions not to teach them. For example, Zoe said “To a close friend, I would not necessarily say ‘I’m afraid I can’t. I’m not available’. Nobody says that” (see 1b in Table 7.3). In this way, the teachers are using their own experience as English language speakers as a reference point to make decisions about teaching English as a foreign language to Thai learners of English. The implication is that what is relevant and ‘natural’ to the teachers as speakers of English from Anglo-western backgrounds will be equally relevant and ‘natural’ to the Thai context. From Verschueren’s (1999) pragmatic perspective, the teachers in their roles as interpreters of the Conversation Strategies appear to draw exclusively on their own physical, social and mental worlds to interpret the language choices in *Hemispheres 2* and demonstrate limited awareness of their students’ physical, social and mental worlds.

**‘Native speaker’ normative model**

Indeed, the normative model of English language use from the teachers’ perspectives appears to be that of the ‘native speaker’. This is best exemplified in Michael’s comments regarding the coursebook’s language choices. For example, “We don't talk like that, these are not the expressions we use in English”; “It's based on my experience - I lived two years in Australia. It's based on my experience in Canada, time I spent in the United States, time I spent in England, time I've spent in Australia. Just Western - Western…” (see 3b in Table 7.3). Michael’s reference point for English language use appears to be his experiences of Western ‘native’ English.
speakers. Accordingly, ‘we’ appears to take on the meaning of Western ‘native’ English speakers preserving the hegemonic status of ‘native’ speakers of English in the EFL classroom context. The question then is whether or not students intend to use English in Western ‘native’ English speaking contexts or with other ‘non-native’ speakers of English. This will be discussed further in the following chapter on students’ perspectives.

**The dominance of grammar**

The final recurrent theme in the teachers’ talk regarding the conversation strategies was that of the dominance of grammar. All teachers mentioned that some of their pedagogical decision making came down to a need to prioritise the grammar section over the Conversation Strategies in the teaching of some units (e.g., see Emily and Michael’s comments in 2d in Table 7.3). Matt and Zoe expressed concern that the Conversation Strategies were not connected with the grammar section of each unit, implying that grammar should be the focus of each unit. Zoe noted the incongruence between the Conversation Strategies and the grammar section of the unit as a point of confusion for her (see 1b in Table 7.3). Matt said he thought the Conversation Strategy *Asking about and Expressing Preferences* would be better suited to a grammar exercise than a Conversation Strategy (see 1b in Table 7.3). The assumption underlying Matt and Zoe’s comments is that there should be alignment between the grammar and the Conversation Strategies. Grammar was mentioned by all the teachers in their interviews for various reasons. In the interview data, the word ‘grammar’ is referenced 54 times by teachers. This is in contrast to one reference to pragmatics by a teacher in the interview data and each of the teachers’ overall unfamiliarity with the term ‘pragmatics’. The foregrounding of grammar in the ELT classroom raises the question of whether the contextual meaning and use of grammatical structures, in other words, pragmatics, are also a pedagogical priority. This will be explored further in Section 7.3 where I examine the teachers’ classroom interactions and their teaching of the Conversation Strategies.

**7.2.1 Summary**

The following Conversation Strategies were not taught by the teachers in the study:

Starting conversations (Unit 1)
Agreeing and disagreeing (Unit 3)
Asking for and giving clarification (Unit 9)
Correcting and admitting mistakes (Unit 12)
The decision not to teach particular Conversation Strategies or associated language was reported by the five teachers as being for the following reasons:

- The phrases are unnatural and not realistic (Owen, Emily)
- Culturally inappropriate (Owen, Matt, Michael)
- Not relevant or useful for students (Owen, Matt, Emily, Michael)
- Too many options (Owen, Matt)
- Other priorities – usually grammar (Matt, Emily, Michael)
- Students not ready (Matt)
- Confusing for students (Owen, Matt, Emily)
- Time constraints – tests and holidays (Michael)

These findings are interesting because they show the teachers’ decision-making and on what grounds the decisions were made. The reasons for excluding the particular Conversation Strategies can be clustered into three main categories: cultural inappropriacy, student language deficiency, and pedagogical considerations such as need for more teaching time in other areas e.g. grammar. Furthermore, five key discourses evident in the teachers’ talk are of significance in terms of the views underpinning teachers’ decision making and their teaching of pragmatics, namely, cultural essentialism, deficit views of students, generalising English language, ‘native speaker’ normative model, and the dominance of grammar. These points are starting to address key questions in terms of the teaching of English as pragmatics, that is, teaching that promotes effective and appropriate English language use in social interactions. In the next section I turn to the teachers’ classroom interactions and the characteristic features of their teaching.

7.3 RECONTEXTUALISING PRAGMATICS – CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS

Fairclough (2003) drawing on Bernstein (1990) argues that the representation of social events is shaped according to four recontextualising ‘principles’ in terms of what elements are included or excluded, their degrees of abstraction, their arrangement and any additions that are made. This section explores how teachers recontextualise the Conversation Strategy section of *Hemispheres 2* – specifically,
which aspects of the Conversation Strategies are included and excluded; the amount of abstraction or generalisation from the coursebook; how the Conversation Strategies lessons are ordered or reordered; and what is added in representing the Conversation Strategies in *Hemispheres* 2. As noted in Chapter Five, I observed each teacher for the duration of each Conversation Strategy they taught as part of the study. Each of these lessons was video recorded. The video data was analysed for the teachers’ recontextualisation of pragmatics in their teaching of the Conversation Strategies. I examine the teachers’ pedagogical responses to the coursebook materials in terms of structure, context, dynamics and salience in line with Verschueren’s (1999) framework as enacted in their classroom practice. A significant finding from Chapter Six was that the coursebook emphasises linguistic structures in the Conversation Strategies and does not provide adequate contextual information for students to understand the dynamics of English language in use. A key question then is whether the teachers in this study contextualise the linguistic structures presented in the Conversation Strategies.

As with the previous section, I utilise Fairclough’s (2001) analytic method of description, interpretation, and explanation. In addition, my analysis in this section draws on research in the area of classroom interactional patterns and discourse (e.g. Cazden, 2001; Walsh, 2006). Classroom interactions in second language classrooms have been heavily researched by Walsh (2006) drawing on the foundational work of Cazden (2001) on the classroom discourse pattern of Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF). Walsh’s (2006) framework of classroom modes including their interactional features helps inform analysis of the interactions in the following section. I now move to explore the classroom teaching practices more closely. My aim is to reveal the characteristic features of the teaching with the analytical emphasis on talk in interaction. In the classroom extracts, the students’ and teachers’ turns are marked as their pseudonym. Turns by other students are shown as Student; when a number of students are involved, their turns are Student 1 and Student 2. In cases where students’ or teachers’ names are mentioned, I have replaced them with pseudonyms.

In each of the teacher’s lessons, mirroring the coursebook, the Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) approach was evident with more or less emphasis on each aspect. Thus, the following subsections are organised according to the teachers’
presentation of the Conversation Strategies (Section 7.3.1), and the classroom practice and production activities (Section 7.3.2).

### 7.3.1 Presenting the Conversation Strategies

While all of the teachers were form-focused in their presentation of the Conversation Strategies, the presentation phase was organised differently by each teacher. Owen and Matt chose not to use *Hemispheres 2* in their presentation of the Conversation Strategies and Zoe, Emily and Michael chose to use the coursebook’s conversation models. How these choices played out in the classroom will be discussed in the following subsections.

**Without the coursebook**

Owen’s presentation of the Conversation Strategy *Asking About and Expressing Preferences* was highly structured as exemplified in his use of tables on the classroom whiteboard to present the target language. Owen put the following language on the whiteboard:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A₁</th>
<th>Which do you like better</th>
<th>coffee or tea?</th>
<th>B₁</th>
<th>I like</th>
<th>Coffee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Which do you prefer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I prefer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is your preference</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My preference is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Would you rather have</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I would rather have</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Would you rather drink</td>
<td>Coke or Pepsi?</td>
<td></td>
<td>“ “ “ drink</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“ “ “ eat</td>
<td>somtam or pizza?</td>
<td></td>
<td>“ “ “ eat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“ “ “ play</td>
<td>tennis or computer games?</td>
<td></td>
<td>“ “ “ play</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A₂</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td>B₂</td>
<td>I think coffee <strong>?</strong>___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 7.1. Owen’s first dialogue*

| A | I like | coffee. In my opinion coffee is better because ____________.
|   | I prefer |
|   | My preference is |
|   | I would rather have |
In my opinion, _____ is better because ____________.

I prefer
My preference is
I’m not big on______
I’m not crazy about_____

Figure 7.2. Owen’s second dialogue

Owen’s decision making regarding his presentation of the Conversation Strategy underscores the impact of the visual modality enacted in the coursebook. The coursebook emphasises particular phrases in bolded green and these were the phrases Owen pulled out to present to the students. Owen’s predominant focus was on structure in the form of exponents associated with the language functions of asking about and expressing preferences as demonstrated in the following excerpt of his lesson:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn #</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>There are other ways, other ways of saying which do you like better? Different ways in English. We say “which do you prefer?” We have “which do you like better? Which do you prefer?” Same meaning. “Which do you like better? Which do you prefer?” All these have the same meaning. “What is your preference?” What is your preference, [gesturing to a student in the class], Fuji or Oishi? What’s your preference?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>I like Oishi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Okay [gesturing to the phrase “My preference is” on the whiteboard]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>My preference is Oishi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Okay. Um another choice is “What would you rather have, coffee or tea?”. I would rather have coffee. Um, what would you rather drink? I would rather drink coca cola. We’re repeating the verb. What would rather eat, somtam or pizza? I would rather eat pizza. Somtam, somtam. We’re in Thailand. What would you rather play, tennis or computer games? I would rather play computer games. So there’s many choices. Let’s try it. Thank you Bomb. What does your card say?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The meanings of particular phrases from the Conversation Strategy are conflated by Owen in Turn 1. In this turn, Owen appears to be focusing on the semantic meaning of the phrases rather than their pragmatic meaning, that is, their contextual appropriacy. In different contexts with different people, the phrases may take on different meanings. However, Owen does not discuss this as part of his presentation. Owen appears to be focussed on the language structures foregrounded in the coursebook. He also appears to be concerned with grammatical agreement. In turn 3, he corrects the student he is modelling the dialogue with, directing him to respond to his question with the same grammatical structure. The implication is that his and other responses would not be appropriate. However, later in turn 9, Owen contradicts this by responding to “What’s your preference?” with “I prefer”. The modelling of the target language in dialogue is highly structured with Owen and Bomb taking turns to read the target language from the coursebook according to their assigned roles. Owen’s use of the coursebook to present the language and his subsequent modelling of the dialogue with students in the class is tightly controlled and directed. The teacher-fronted nature of the interaction above is characterised by extended teacher turns and teacher-directed student responses with an explicit emphasis on forms. The context appeared to be secondary to language that was being presented and was not overtly connected to students’ contexts of use outside the classroom.
Owen’s consideration of context with respect to the Conversation Strategies is best exemplified in the following lesson extract:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn #</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Which do you like – just this phrase – “which do you like better…?” Ok “I like”. Do some practice. Which do you like better, coke or pepsi? Which do you like better, coke or pepsi?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>I like both.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Choose one, today. You must choose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Okay, I like coke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Coke tastes good er better than Pepsi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This interaction shows the importance Owen places on the target language of the Conversation Strategies at the expense of context. Owen’s initiation (I) in turn 1 elicits an authentic response (R) from the student in turn 2. It presumably reflects what the student actually thinks, a response that comes from the world outside the classroom. Owen’s feedback (F) in turn 3 does not acknowledge the authenticity of the student’s response. Instead, he redirects the student to not only make a choice, but also come up with a reason for her choice. In turn 2, the student offers an authentic answer that builds on what has been said before and could move the lesson forward particularly with respect to pragmatics. However, Owen appears to be refusing to allow these kinds of authentic responses inside the classroom. His response shows a clear pedagogical focus on forms, but at the same time it eliminates culture, personal relevance and authenticity, as well as student voice and legitimacy. Owen could have used classroom discourse in terms of the students’ competent response (R) and his own feedback (F) to extend the class’ knowledge of pragmatics reflecting the potential value of the IRF sequence in classroom discourse. Indeed, the reason IRF had superseded the earlier more limiting classroom discourse label of Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) was due to the recognition that teachers’ feedback could do more than evaluate and as such contribute in new ways to student learning (Cazden, 2001). However, as shown in the extract above, the student’s competency was denied in Owen’s evaluative response and it shut down the opportunity to explore authentic contextualised language use, that is, pragmatics.
Students’ competency with respect to the Conversation Strategies is a topic that will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Matt took a similar form-focused approach to Owen in presenting the target language, first using the whiteboard and later his own handout (see Appendix H). He introduced the language without reference to a particular context. His initial focus was on concept checking, explaining, and eliciting target language. Notable in Matt’s presentation of the target language in the Conversation Strategy Asking About and Expressing Preferences was his instruction to students not to use the phrase “What’s your preference?”. As he is presenting possible ways of asking about preferences, Matt makes the following comment:

Matt The book also puts in this one [writes on whiteboard] “What’s your preference?” “What’s your preference?” That’s okay, but it sounds kind of dry, like a robot. If I’m in a restaurant and my waiter comes up to me and says “What’s your preference, coke or water?” It sounds kind of dry, a little bit rude in that situation. I would prefer that you say “Would you rather have coke or water?” It’s a little bit more polite. So I think today we’re not gonna talk about “What’s your preference?” because it sounds so dry, so robotic. I don’t want you guys to sound like robots.

Matt’s comment is part of an extended teacher turn in which he is presenting the target language to his students. In classroom discourse terms, the excerpt reflects a managerial mode with the pedagogical goal of transmitting information (Walsh, 2006). Managerial mode in classroom discourse is characterised by an extended teacher turn and the absence of learner involvement. In this way, the aim of Matt’s instruction here appears to be to manage his students’ learning rather than to elicit responses in relation to the material and enable students to manipulate the target language which are characteristic of other more dialogic modes of classroom discourse (Walsh, 2006). Matt is beginning to address pragmatic concerns. However, his talk is monologic leaving no room for students to question or discuss the possible appropriate uses of the phrase. He immediately goes on to explain the grammatical features of the other language he has presented. What we see in Matt’s presentation are his own intuitions of the use of “What’s your preference?” being generalised across all uses of the phrase. He also appears to be concerned that his students might
use the phrase inappropriately. In his stimulated recall interview, Matt explained his concern further:

> It’s always in a more professional setting, is a preference. That’s why I feel the need and I don’t want the students, they tend to latch on to the easiest thing for them to say or the most relatable thing. And since I know the Thai people always talk about preferences. I’ve heard them say prefer. I prefer this, I prefer that. I don’t want them to latch onto the word preference. You know I don’t want them to do that.

(Matt: Interview 2, 5/2/13)

Matt’s justification for not teaching the phrase “what’s your preference?” appears to be based on cultural grounds and his comments reflect quite generalised views of culture as well as deficit views of his students. Matt’s comment that “they tend to latch on to the easiest thing for them to say or the most relatable thing” generalises specific traits to all the students in his class and the traits he specifies position students as lacking the ability to make discerning linguistic choices. In terms of pragmatics, Matt demonstrates some awareness of contextual differences in language use. However, rather than exploring contextual differences in language use with his students, he took a prescriptive approach and chose to exclude the pieces of language that he thought may be used by students inappropriately. The mode of Matt’s classroom talk and the limited contextual information provided to students undermined the representation of the dynamic interplay of context and structure in interaction.

**With the coursebook**

In contrast to Owen and Matt, Zoe, Emily and Michael used the coursebook’s conversation models to present the Conversation Strategies. Zoe modelled the conversation with students from the class in front of the classroom, Emily played the coursebook’s audio CD, and Michael read the conversation model aloud to the class on his own. As such, the teachers mostly preserved the coursebook’s presentation of context and language.

A distinctive feature of Zoe and Emily’s presentation phase was their elicitation of language from students as a way of checking their existing knowledge of concepts and language related to the Conversation Strategies they were teaching. In one lesson, Zoe presented the three key functions of the Conversation Strategy
Offering, Accepting, and Declining Invitations on the whiteboard, concept checked, and elicited examples of each function from students as shown in the following extract that focuses on declining invitations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn #</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>Very good. Okay. If acceptance is yes, what is decline?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Whole class</td>
<td>Decline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>Decline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Whole class</td>
<td>Decline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>Very good. [gestures to a student] Would you give me an example of a decline? [pause] Would you like to go pub-hopping tonight?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>No, I’m busy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>Oh that is so good. That was excellent. Well done. No, I’m busy. That is very good. [gestures to another student] Can you give me an example of a decline? Would you like to go pub-hopping tonight?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>No, I have to… I have to go with my family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>That is very good. That is excellent. Okay. Alright, open your books. Open your books to page 55. Okay. Who would like to help me role-model this? Role-play. Who would like to help me?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of interest in this extract of Zoe’s lesson is the predominance of Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF), extensive use of display questions, and form-focused feedback. These interactional features are characteristic of Materials mode which aims to elicit responses in relation to the material, to check and display answers, and to clarify and evaluate students’ contributions (Walsh, 2006). Notably absent in Zoe’s concept checking is the use of scaffolding or corrective repair which may have extended students’ knowledge regarding their use of the language and concepts they are displaying. For example, the use of ‘no’ in declining an invitation in turns 8 and 10, while grammatically correct, may be seen as too direct in everyday language use in
some contexts. However, this was not addressed by Zoe. It may have been that the students’ responses reflected Zoe’s own language use or that Zoe did not want to highlight anything potentially negative in the students’ responses. Nonetheless, appropriate ways of responding to invitations were not addressed by Zoe in her elicitation of students’ language or in her presentation of the target language in Hemispheres 2.

In turn 7, Zoe asks a student to give her an example of a decline. She asks the student to go pub-hopping. The student’s response in turn 8, “No, I’m busy”, is evaluated very positively by Zoe in turn 9 in contrast to her other positive evaluations throughout the lesson. The implication is that the student has said something that Zoe believes is a model response. However, Zoe does not draw attention to why that is and the students are left to figure out what that might be. A decline in response to an invitation is considered a dispreferred response and as such additional moves in the form of excuses are usually required in order to maintain the relationship between the person offering the invitation and the person declining (Verschueren, 1999). While this may have been the point Zoe was making in her evaluation of the student’s response in turn 8 and another student’s response in turn 10, she did not make this subtle aspect of pragmatic language use explicit. This is particularly significant considering Wannaruk’s (2008) finding that Thai learners of English transferred pragmatic norms of Thai refusals when learning English language refusals. Wannaruk (2008) made the point that pragmatic transfer may lead to misinterpretations and miscommunication without explicit exploration of the sociolinguistic norms that underpin refusals. Throughout Zoe’s concept checking there are several opportunities for Zoe to use the feedback response to extend students’ pragmatic knowledge in relation to their responses. However, none of these are taken up. It could be that Zoe does not see pragmatics as necessary information for the students in her class or that she does not have the necessary pedagogical content knowledge to teach pragmatics.

In contrast, Michael appeared to see pragmatic information as important information for his class. In the following extract of Michael’s lesson on the Conversation Strategy Discussing Opinions, he raises the concept of politeness. He presents the Conversation Strategy as the language used in English to politely disagree. In this way, he reduces the focus of the Conversation Strategy from
language used to discuss opinions to the language used to express an opposing view. To present the Conversation Strategy, Michael wrote the following language on the whiteboard:

That’s wrong!

How can you say that?! Do you think maybe that...

You’re wrong.

I don’t think so.

I disagree.

I hear what you’re saying, but...

Figure 7.3. Michael’s presentation of the Conversation Strategy **Discussing Opinions**

Of the seven phrases Michael wrote on the whiteboard, two were used in the coursebook’s conversation model – “I disagree” and “I hear what you’re saying, but...”. “I hear what you’re saying, but...” was one of the coursebook’s target phrases whereas “I disagree” was not. Michael appeared to be using the phrases he wrote on the whiteboard to illustrate and elicit students’ knowledge of polite and impolite forms of disagreement as shown in the following lesson extract.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn #</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>We’re going to move to page 99. We’re going to do Conversation Strategies. Okay. On page 99, what the purpose of this exercise is, is to introduce to you English language that we use for polite disagreement, for telling someone that you think they’re wrong. I think what you are saying is not correct. How do we manage to do that in English without causing problems? With causing a minimum of problems. Well, we’re going to learn some of the words and phrases we use to tell someone they’re full of incorrect information. You thought I was going to say something else, didn’t you? [laughs] Okay. Suppose somebody said these things to us [writes phrases on WB (see Figure 7.3)]. These words are English expressions that we can use to disagree with what another person is saying. Which of those do you think is most polite and which do you think is most impolite? Or argumentative? Let’s start with the ones you think are most impolite. [long pause] Okay. “Mod you’re wrong!” Is that polite?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Multiple students</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>It’s not. It’s very direct. “I disagree.” Is that polite? On a scale of one to five. “I disagree.” Polite or maybe not or in the middle?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Multiple students</td>
<td>In the middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>In the middle. I think so. All it says is that you disagree. It does not offer any further explanation, it doesn’t accuse the other person. “How can you say that?” [loudly – with emphasis on you]. “How can you say that? How can you say something stupid like that?” Never mind the stupid bit, how can you say that? Gop, is that polite or is that not polite?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Gop</td>
<td>Not polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>Not polite. I hear what you’re saying, but I think something else... Is that polite or not polite?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Multiple students</td>
<td>Polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>It’s okay. It’s okay. You acknowledge the other person. You don’t attack the other person. The ones that we consider impolite (circling on the whiteboard) generally attack the other person. “You’re wrong!”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this excerpt, Michael’s classroom talk appears to be characteristic of Skills and Systems mode with extended teacher turns (turns 1, 5, and 9), display questions (turns 1, 3, 5, and 7), and teacher echo (turns 5 and 7). According to Walsh (2006), the pedagogical aims of Skills and Systems mode are to enable learners to produce correct forms and to manipulate the target language. A key interactional feature absent in this excerpt is that of clarification requests. Neither Michael nor his students seek clarification around any of the input Michael and the students provide. The implication is that the pragmatic input being provided is unquestioned. Michael’s prescriptive categorisation of phrases into polite and impolite forms is reductive in the sense that it does not consider key variables related to politeness such as social distance, power relations, and the potential threat to face involved. So while Michael appears to value pragmatics, his teaching of pragmatics appears to be informed by his own essentialised views of language use reflecting ‘native speaker’ norms with the assumption that what is polite and impolite to him will be understood and applied in the same way by his students.

**Representing pragmatics**

The teachers’ presentations of the Conversation Strategies each focused predominantly on the target language foregrounded in the coursebook. In this way, it appears that the teachers’ language choices were constrained by the coursebook. Although Matt, Zoe, and Emily focused on the meaning of key concepts, the contextual use of particular phrases was rarely dealt with by the teachers. As such, the contextual meaning of the phrases and expressions were generalised across multiple contexts reflecting the coursebook’s reductive presentation of the Conversation Strategies. Fairclough (2003) makes the point that the degree of generalisation or abstraction is a key recontextualising principle which can lead to social change. The opportunity to contextualise the Conversation Strategies – thereby making them more concrete – was not taken up by the teachers in the study.
reinforcing the coursebook’s status as a genre of governance in its role as a de facto curriculum. The teachers’ presentations of the Conversation Strategies were primarily teacher-fronted with extended teacher turns and a predominant use of IRF leaving limited space for students’ questions and exploration of their English language use. While Emily and Zoe elicited students’ prior language knowledge, they did not use this to explore or extend students’ pragmatic knowledge. In Verschueren’s (1999) terms, the teachers’ presentation phases focused on structure with a limited focus on context. Furthermore, there was no emphasis given to the dynamic interadaptability of structure and context. With the exception of “What’s your preference?” in Matt’s lesson, phrases were presented as equivalent in meaning and appropriacy. Zoe, Matt, and Emily drew on students’ linguistic knowledge, but none of the teachers drew on their students’ contextual knowledge or contexts of EL use. In this study, the presentation phase appears to be characterised by teacher-frontedness and an extensive use of display questions leaving limited space to explore, discuss, or examine the use of the target language, features that might facilitate greater consideration of pragmatics. In recontextualising pragmatic interactions from the coursebook to the classroom, very little was added by the teachers in the way of explanations or evaluations of the Conversation Strategies further supporting the coursebook’s reductive presentation of English language use.

### 7.3.2 Classroom Activities

In the teachers’ lessons that I observed at BELS, I saw activities where students produced language with output varying from controlled, discrete language items to cohesive oral discourse. However, while the teachers were critical of the authenticity of the language in the coursebook in their interviews, none of the teachers problematized the type of output students produced in terms of its relevance and connection to everyday spoken discourse. As outlined below in Table 7.4, the classroom activities included: oral drills, written activities, role-plays, and skits.

Table 7.4

*Teachers’ Classroom Activities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Conversation Strategy</th>
<th>Classroom Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Asking about and</td>
<td>Pair work substitution drill (the whiteboard and topic cards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Conversation Strategy</td>
<td>Classroom Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>expressing preferences</td>
<td>Mingling substitution drill (the whiteboard and topic cards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Substitution drill mock debate (the whiteboard)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Written workbook activity in groups (the workbook)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt</td>
<td>Asking about and expressing preferences</td>
<td>Survey (activity C from the coursebook)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parallel line substitution drill (the whiteboard and handout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Freer substitution practice (the whiteboard and handout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>Offering, Accepting and Declining Invitations</td>
<td>Pair work substitution drill (activity B from the coursebook)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expressing Sympathy and Concern</td>
<td>Cut up dialogue (reading dialogue strips)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hesitating and Refusing Politely</td>
<td>Two role-plays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epmpy</td>
<td>Helping People Make Decisions</td>
<td>Read aloud practice of the dialogue in pairs (coursebook conversation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using Exclamations to Express Opinions</td>
<td>Role-play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Skit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>Discussing Opinions</td>
<td>Repetition drill of the dialogue (T-whole class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read aloud practice of the dialogue in pairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pair work substitution drill (activity B from the coursebook)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Freer substitution practice (activity B from the coursebook)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using Oral Drills

Directly following their presentation of the Conversation Strategies, most of the teachers included a practice phase which most commonly involved the use of oral drills as a classroom activity. The oral drills ranged in level of control from repetition drills to read-a-loud practice with a partner to substitution drills to freer substitution practice. Michael was the only teacher in the study to use a repetitive drill in which his students repeated the coursebook conversation dialogue line by line after him. Just prior to the repetition drill, Michael said to the class “I will read these conversations for you so you will have some idea of correct pronunciation.” The justification for the repetitive drill appears to be for students to practice pronunciation with the implication that Michael’s Canadian pronunciation of the conversation dialogue would be a useful model for the students. It raises questions of whether the students found this useful and which pronunciation models they value in terms of English. This will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Read-a-loud practice of the coursebook conversation dialogue was utilised by Zoe and Michael with students reading the coursebook’s conversation dialogue aloud with a partner. Zoe used a parallel line drill where students stood in parallel lines and practiced the dialogue in pairs each taking on different roles in the conversation. After each single practice, one line rotated allowing for multiple repetitions of the dialogue with different conversational partners. Michael used a mingling drill where students stood and practiced the dialogue in pairs each taking on different roles in the conversation moving on to a new partner once they had a completed a single practice again allowing for repetition. The aim of repetition in these drills appears to be for students to incorporate or begin to memorise the target language from the conversation dialogue. In terms of pragmatics, repetition is significant as the students are often constrained in their ability to make linguistic choices in English by their ability to remember and recall English. However, as Verschueren (1999) points out, pragmatics is about making linguistic choices in context; and without reference to the contextual variables that constrain language use, repeating the target language in a context-reduced classroom activity may not provide adequate contextual information for it to become salient to students. What was salient to students with respect to the Conversation Strategies will be discussed in the following chapter.
An extension of the repetitive drill is the substitution drill where students substituted new topics and target language into a dialogue to practise with a partner. For example, in Owen’s Conversation Strategy lesson on *Asking About and Expressing Preferences*, students were instructed to practice the dialogue he had written on the whiteboard as outlined in the previous section. They were then given topics on small cards to substitute into the conversation and continue their practice of the target language. This was followed by the use of the second dialogue in another substitution drill activity. The predominant focus of Owen’s lesson appeared to be on the controlled repetitive use of the target language. The context of Owen’s activities was the classroom and the topics were mostly teacher-generated with no explicit connection made to students’ contexts of use of the language functions outside the classroom, either in Thai or English. Similarly, the other teachers utilised the classroom as the context for their classroom activities without consideration of the contextual variables that impact the use of the Conversation Strategies they were teaching and the relevance of their students’ contexts in making language choices. Utilising the classroom as the context for the practising the Conversation Strategies where the roles and relationships of students are more or less of equal status erased the opportunity for students to explore the influences of contextual variables in English language use.

Furthermore, practice of the target language from the Conversation Strategies seemed to have been of greater importance than the authenticity of students’ responses as already demonstrated through Owen’s presentation of the Conversation Strategies in Section 7.3.1. Similarly, in setting up a practice activity, Matt prescribed his students’ responses as outlined in the following lesson excerpt:

```
Matt So let’s do this. Two teams. Team A and team B. So we’ll have team A and team B. We’ll say this is team A and this is team B. Anybody who gets team B has to talk about this stuff [pointing to whiteboard]. Anybody who gets team A has to talk about that stuff. Ok? So if you say what do you prefer? Try to say “I prefer True Online because…” Just try it. Try it for maybe a minute and then say your real opinion.
```

Matt’s justification for doing this is explained in the following excerpt from his stimulated recall interview:

```
Because normally again like I feel like the Thai students have been dictated to their whole life so they only know what they’re told and when it comes to
their opinions, they don’t think outside of it. So if they, they don’t look at the... maybe they don’t like something, they tend to not look at the pro side of it anyway, and so I try to force them to kind of think a little differently than they would. Um, like I don’t like to give them directions that are, like I don’t like to model a conversation and I wipe out one word and say fill in the word. That teaches nothing. And I don’t like to get them to simply regurgitate. I like them to think about stuff, figure it out a little bit. Like direct them and lead them as opposed to dictating to them because then they remember a little more I feel. So that’s the thing like if maybe I like Apple but I’m stuck on the Samsung side, I’m going to have to think about the good things of Samsung, just as a thought exercise. So they’re practising thinking of the positives on something they don’t like. That’s it. That’s the only reason why.

(Matt: Interview 2, 5/2/13)

In the above excerpt, Matt is referring to Thai students collectively conflating their nationality with particular ways of thinking (or not thinking). His views reflect essentialist notions of Thai culture and ignore the diverse cultural and linguistic resources of Thai students. Implicit in Matt’s comments is the belief that Thai students are not capable of thinking or acting critically. His comments pertain to what he perceives the students lack against the backdrop of what he perceives they need. The assumption in this deficit discourse is that there is a dominant norm from which Thai students ‘differ’. There is an ascribed certainty in this comparison which fails to acknowledge the complexity within and across cultures. While it could be that Matt’s activity choice might have resulted in deeper processing of the target language making it easier for his students to remember, his comments reflect essentialised views of Thai culture and deficit views of his students which overlook student agency. What students find helpful in terms of remembering the target language from the Conversation Strategies will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Matt and Michael both used freer substitution practice activities in their lessons where students were still constrained by the target language and topics Matt and Michael gave to them, yet had freedom to choose which target language they would use and which topics they would talk about. These activities extended the repetition of the target language foregrounded in Matt and Michael’s previous activities and
gave students more freedom to provide authentic responses. However, as with the other oral drill activities, the context of these activities was the classroom. Social variables such as relationships, status, and roles were not addressed by Matt or Michael and were not a part of their activities raising the question of how students would interpret and recontextualise the target language for use in other social settings beyond the classroom. This will be explored further in Chapter Eight.

**Using Written Activities**

Owen and Emily each used written activities as part of their Conversation Strategy lessons. The use of written activities is of interest given that the focus of Conversation Strategies is spoken interaction. For Owen, the inclusion of a written activity appeared to be to provide an opportunity for students to focus on the target language and produce grammatically correct forms. Owen ended his Conversation Strategy lesson with a written activity from the student workbook (see Figure 7.4). In this activity, he did not refer to the context of the interactions in the workbook activities. The assumption is that contextual information was not relevant or important for students to complete the activities. The first activity seemed to be concerned with the structure of the target phrases and expressions, specifically the word order. The second activity involved the use of the phrases from the first activity.
Of particular interest in this activity was Owen’s use of error correction to extend students’ knowledge of the meaning of one of the Conversation Strategy phrases as shown in the following extract from his lesson.

Owen: Did anyone have a different position or location for much? A different, different answer?

Student: I’d much rather…

Owen: Yes [writing the correction on the whiteboard]. So I would much rather… I can say “I would rather take the subway” but I can make it very strong. I can say “I'd much rather take the subway”. Much is strong. Much is here [pointing to its position in the sentence on the whiteboard].
In this lesson excerpt, Owen uses the IRF sequence to extend students’ knowledge of the use of ‘much’ in expressing preferences. While focusing on the word order of the phrases, Owen takes the opportunity to also focus on meaning. This information is beginning to address pragmatic concerns in that it highlights the difference between two of the Conversation Strategy phrases. Furthermore, it shows how teachers can use classroom discourse to contribute to students’ learning about the Conversation Strategies beyond structure.

In contrast, Emily’s use of the workbook activity highlighted the challenges in teaching the meaning of phrases in the Conversation Strategies. Extending her presentation of the Conversation Strategy Using Exclamations to Express Opinions, Emily asked her students to categorise the expressions from the Conversation Strategy into positive exclamations, exclamations of disbelief, and negative exclamations according to the workbook activity shown in Figure 7.5 below.

![Figure 7.5. Using Exclamations to Express Opinions Workbook Activity A (Johannsen, 2008, p. 48)](image)

In her stimulated recall interview, Emily expressed her goal in including this activity in the following way:

Emily: Okay so I had them fill out that chart just so they could... hopefully it could reinforce the difference between each kind of exclamation.

AS: Hmm hmm.
Emily: So if you’re shocked because of something you don’t believe or you’re shocked like in a bad way or negative way, then the difference between like showing the meaning behind what exclamation you’re using.

(Emily: Interview 2, 6/5/13)

In the above excerpt, Emily is expressing concern with students’ appropriate use of the exclamations highlighted in the Conversation Strategy. However, later in the interview she acknowledged that the workbook’s categorisation may not be clear for her students.

Emily: I think for them that might be a little bit confusing, like “that’s a crazy idea”, “that’s risky” like I mean I don’t even know is that an Exclamation of Disbelief or a Negative Exclamation.

(Emily: Interview 2, 6/5/13)

Emily’s comment highlights the potential ambiguity in the meaning of the exclamations. In discussing the phrase “That’s ridiculous!”, Emily noted the importance of considering contextual variables to be able to assign them to the workbook categories accurately.

Emily: “That’s ridiculous”. Like, I don’t know, I think that they were probably confused by it. I’m confused by it.

AS: Confused about what sort of specifically?

Emily: Well because it’s like how do you know if you’re not… if you’re putting things like in boxes and you’re not like hearing conversations then you don’t know how it’s being used. Right?

(Emily: Interview 2, 6/5/13)

Emily appears to be saying that how a phrase is being used in context has a significant role in making meaning of structure in conversation. However, contextual meaning is not addressed by the coursebook and was not addressed by Emily in the classroom. With respect to her use of the written activity to teach the differences between the phrases in this Conversation Strategy, Emily commented that she “didn’t know of a better way to teach it”. Emily’s status as a new teacher meant that she had limited experience to draw on in order to develop lesson plans. This raises the question of teacher knowledge in the field of English language teaching in EFL contexts and how teacher training, coursebooks, and professional development
prepare teachers to teach English language conversation. This will be discussed further in the discussion section of this chapter.

**Using Role-plays and Skits**

Zoe and Emily used role-plays and skits as classroom activities in teaching the Conversation Strategies drawing on a variety of situations as shown in Table 7.5 below.

**Table 7.5**

*Role-plays and skits*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Conversation Strategy</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Situations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zoe</td>
<td>Offering Accepting and Declining Invitations</td>
<td>Role-play</td>
<td>Offering, accepting and declining a special deal in a shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Role-play</td>
<td>Students making plans with other students in the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expressing Sympathy and Concern</td>
<td>Role-play</td>
<td>People giving and receiving bad news at the bank, at the supermarket, and at the hospital; and parents giving bad news to their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hesitating and Refusing Politely</td>
<td>Skit</td>
<td>Refusing an offer in a bank; refusing a business offer by a friend; refusing an offer in a department store; and refusing an offer in a car dealership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Using Exclamations to Express Opinions</td>
<td>Skit</td>
<td>Sharing ‘risky’ news - moving to a foreign country; getting a tattoo; getting married to someone you just met; and going skydiving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In setting up each of the role play activities, students were asked to think of the content for their situation within a particular theme, such as a problem, ‘risky’ plans, a product or an offer. However, they were not asked to consider their specific roles within the contexts they were given and how that might influence their language choices. Role plays and skits provide students with the opportunity to engage in different social roles and speech events and to practise the contextual use of English which could then be put to use by students in their diverse interactions outside the classroom. However, this requires that teachers draw students’ attention to the contextual nature of various phrases and expressions from the Conversation
Strategies for use in the activities. While Zoe and Emily’s activities gave students the opportunity to practise using English in contexts relevant beyond the classroom, neither teacher explicitly taught the impact of social factors such as social distance, status, and degree of imposition on language choice.

Furthermore, in Zoe’s activities, the use of the target phrases from the Conversation Strategies was not prioritised raising the question of the activities’ purpose in the lesson and applicability beyond the classroom. For example, Zoe set up a role play for the Conversation Strategy *Offering, Accepting, and Declining Invitations* in which she asked students to write their own schedules including four activities at different times. The students were then asked to find other people who fit into their schedule so they could plan a ‘coffee date’ or a ‘movie date’ with them. Zoe modelled the activity in the following way:

Zoe: First person to complete their schedule, to have a full day, wins. You may get up and find your dates. Get up and find your dates. For example, [speaking to a student in the class] “Hello, do you have seven o’clock in the evening free?”

Student: No, I don’t.

Zoe: No you don’t? Oh, I wanted to have coffee with you. Ok. Thank you anyway. [addressing another student in the class] “Hello, do you have seven o’clock free?”

Student: No.

Zoe: Oh. No. Okay. Two rejections. Okay so everyone get up and find your dates.

While the activity aligns with the Conversation Strategy *Offering, Accepting and Declining Invitations*, the language Zoe used to model the activity is not the language foregrounded in the coursebook. The language Zoe used appears to be more appropriate to completing the activity than offering an invitation. The added component of competition in Zoe’s activity suggests it has been set up to be fun and engaging for students, features which appeared to be common objectives of all of Zoe’s role-play and skit activities. The ludic quality of Zoe’s activities appeared to take precedence over pragmatics. Accordingly, it is the classroom context in which fun is foregrounded that provided the norms of appropriacy for language use.
reducing its relevance to the diverse contexts in which students might find themselves using English beyond the classroom.

**Topic Choices**

In addition to the types of classroom activities used in the Conversation Strategies, the topics chosen for the activities by the teachers in the study are also notable. Zoe and Emily as relatively new to Thailand provided topics and situations that were broad and generic. This was in contrast to Owen, Matt and Michael who had been in Thailand for a longer period and attempted to localise or personalise the topics for their students. Owen provided students with topics to use the target language as indicated in Table 7.6 below, eliciting a few of the topics from students (indicated in bold). Several of Owen’s topic choices have been localised for the Thai context including specific restaurants and shopping malls in Thailand. However, as with the coursebook, the topic choices appear to be oriented towards well-educated, middle class, urban young adults.

Table 7.6

*Owen’s topic choices*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics for asking about and expressing preferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coffee/tea (drinks); Coke/Pepsi (drinks); Fish/Chicken (food); Somtam/Pizza (food); Email/Text (method of communication); Hot/Cold (weather); Fuji/Oishi (restaurant chains in Thailand); Tennis/Computer Games (games); School/Work (Occupation); BTS/MRT (Bangkok transportation); Dogs/Cats (pets); Coke/Green Tea (drinks); Tennis/Badminton (games); Angelina Jolie/Jackie Chan (movie stars); Iphone/Samsung (mobile phones); Jazz/Classical (music); Siam Square/Platinum (Bangkok shopping malls); Teacher/Doctor (jobs); BELS/Boston Bright (English language schools in Bangkok); English/Chinese (languages)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Matt’s topic choices were drawn from Activity C of the Conversation Strategy lesson in the coursebook, his own ideas as well as ideas elicited from the students in his class. The complete list of topics used in the lesson is included in Table 7.7 below.
Matt’s topic choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student book Activity C Topics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest and Relaxation/Adventure; to be in nature/to be in the city; to travel where you know the language/to travel where you don’t know the language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Topics chosen by Matt** |
| Apple/Samsung; Apples/Durian; AIS/DTAC; True online/3BB; Starbucks/Black Canyon; After you/Coffee Bean; Major Cineplex/SF Cinema; DHL/Fedex; see an Action movie/see a Romance; go to the beach/go to the mountains; get a tattoo/ get a piercing; get plastic surgery/stay natural; go to RCA/go to a temple on Saturday night; Japanese food/Italian food; a man/a woman; android/iphone; dressing up/dressing casual; pop music/rock and roll music. |

As with Owen’s topic choices, Matt’s choices are oriented toward use by students in the context of the classroom rather than for use in the outside world. Matt discusses some of his choices in the following excerpt:

Matt: Thai people are very familiar with the beach and the mountains. I in class always joke about tattoos and piercing that’s why I put that in there.

AS: So they have that... yeah.

Matt: They have the reference. And then you know Thais with surgery and stay natural, RCA or temple, go to the bar or go to the temple, it’s a party town, that’s a frequent question you know. Japanese food or Italian food because Japanese food’s so popular. Italian food’s a foreigner food with noodles.

AS: Yeah.

Matt: That’s why I chose it.

AS: Yeah.

Matt: Man or woman, would you prefer a man or a woman because of the variety of sexual orientations in the classroom.
In this excerpt Matt is discussing the topic choices he made and he is referring to his perceptions of what Thai people are interested in. Matt’s explanations of his topic choices reflect a concern with engaging his students. As with the coursebook, Matt’s topic choices appear to be oriented toward young, middle class lifestyles with topics such as technology, leisure activities, travel and food. However, Matt’s topic choices are mostly generic with the exception of RCA, a popular Bangkok night club area, raising the question of how familiar he is with his students’ contexts. This is in contrast with his students’ choices (in bold) which are all localised to include local brands and places. As with his decision making about what to teach his students, his comments represent a generalised view of culture raising the question of how students feel about the topic choices Matt made. This will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Moreover, Matt’s topic choices were diverse and varied in their appropriacy for particular contexts. Topics such as sexual preference may be considered a controversial topic choice for the classroom as well as other contexts outside the classroom. However, the appropriacy of this topic choice to different contexts was not raised by Matt in the class. Similarly, Michael used what might be considered a taboo topic in one of his classroom activities. He used the topic of the ‘Red Shirt’ political protests in his lesson on Discussing Opinions. While the topic is relevant to the Conversation Strategy, the sensitivity of the topic raises the question of its appropriacy within the classroom and the broadness of its applicability beyond the classroom.

**Representing Pragmatics**

Most of the classroom activities focused on students’ practice of the phrases and expressions drawn from the Conversation Strategies in the coursebook with the exception of Zoe’s role-play and skit activities. While some of the teachers’ activities incorporated contexts beyond the classroom, the majority of the activities were centred around or influenced by the classroom context. Furthermore, as with the
presentation of the Conversation Strategies, the contextual use of phrases was not explicitly taught or addressed by the teachers in their classroom activities. The influences of diverse social roles, relationships, and settings on language choices were not foregrounded in the classroom activities. While most of the teachers attempted to localise topics for their classroom activities, the degree of localisation was contingent upon teachers’ knowledge of Thailand. Teachers’ knowledge of Thailand appeared to be constrained by their length of stay in Thailand and essentialised views of Thai culture. Furthermore, some of the topics teachers chose for activities were controversial and taboo and therefore limited in their applicability and appropriacy beyond the classroom. Pragmatics is concerned with language in use for particular social purposes, that is, for getting things done interactionally and transactionally without losing face. In line with the findings from the coursebook analysis, most teachers in this study were found to foreground the linguistic over the pragmatic in their classroom activities focusing on the students’ acquisition of structures rather than their appropriate use.

7.4 DISCUSSION

The analysis of the teacher data as outlined in the previous sections aimed at identifying the key elements of the teachers’ pedagogical decision making and classroom practices, and at identifying how this was of relevance to the teaching of pragmatics to English language learners in the EFL context of Thailand. I undertook to examine the teachers’ decision making and classroom practices and to use these findings to make claims about teachers’ readiness to teach pragmatics. The teacher data revealed significant gaps in the teachers’ readiness to teach pragmatics constituted by: their reliance on the coursebook; their arbitration of cultural appropriacy; their pedagogical approaches; the dominant focus on grammar teaching; their profiles and motivations as English language teachers; their limited pragmatic knowledge; and their perception of their students. These imperatives will be discussed in the following subsections.

The Coursebook as a Genre of Governance

In Chapter Six, I introduced the notion of the ELT coursebook as a genre of governance (Fairclough, 2003), a text that governs the way things are done; in this case in English language educational institutions. As consumers and users of ELT
coursebooks, teachers have a significant role in the selection and distribution of the content of such genres. The teacher data is significant in that it reveals that teachers are heavily reliant on the coursebook to guide and shape their teaching reinforcing the coursebook’s status as a genre of governance. In the teaching of Conversation Strategies, the teachers relied on the coursebook to provide the linguistic content for their lessons, models for English language in use, and activities to practise the Conversation Strategies. For all teachers in my study, the coursebook determined the Conversation Strategies and associated target phrases and expressions that they taught. No Conversation Strategies, phrases or expressions were added to the coursebook’s selection by teachers in the teaching of the Conversation Strategies and very few phrases or expressions were cut. While Owen and Matt only taught one of the three Conversation Strategies available to them, the coursebook determined the phrases and expressions they taught to students for that particular Conversation Strategy. In the cases of Zoe, Emily and Michael, the coursebook was used to present the Conversation Strategies they taught as well as to practise the exponents associated with them. All teachers followed the presentation, practice, production approach of the coursebook. All teachers preserved the linguistic focus of the coursebook in teaching Conversation Strategies. Accordingly, the coursebook has a key determining role in the classroom. Indeed, the central role of the coursebook in ELT classrooms has been acknowledged elsewhere in the ELT methodology literature (Byrd, 2001; Harmer, 2007; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994).

The prevalent use of coursebooks in ELT classrooms has been problematized by those who see the ELT coursebook as a cultural artefact which serves to make English mean in particular ways (Gray, 2010; Thornbury, 2013). According to Gray (2013, p. 3),

[Coursebooks] are cultural artefacts from which meanings emerge about the language being taught, associating it with particular ways of being, particular varieties of language and ways of using language, and particular sets of values.

In this study, the coursebook analysis found that Hemispheres 2 appears to have reduced English language use to sets of functional exponents used to realise particular linguistic functions of Standard American English. Language users were represented as ‘native speaker’ American language users engaged in predominantly
middle class lifestyle activities despite Hemisphere’s claim to be written for an ‘international’ audience including Thai and other Asian users of English. Limited consideration was given to the contextual variables that constrain linguistic choice undermining the dynamics inherent in language use. While teachers in this study argued against the authenticity and relevance of the coursebook’s representation of English language use in their interviews, the classroom observation data revealed that they did not transform their teaching to resist the predominantly linguistic representations of the coursebook. This is of note because it suggests that teachers may not have the knowledge or tools to be able to teach pragmatics effectively. In the absence of professional development and adequate training for teachers, the global ELT coursebook as a genre of governance has significant power in terms of its relationship with the local EFL context.

‘Native Speaker’ Teachers as Arbiters of Appropriacy

Where teachers did resist the coursebook, they did so because the content was perceived to be culturally inappropriate or irrelevant for students in the class. Three of the four of the teachers in the study who chose not to teach particular Conversation Strategies did so due to their belief that the Conversation Strategies would not be relevant or useful for students. However, these teachers were non-natives of Thailand and were not proficient in Thai raising the question of how the teachers in the study could know what would be relevant for students in the Thai context. As Seidlhofer (2004, p. 211) notes, English “is being shaped, in its international uses, at least as much by its non-native speakers as its native speakers”. As such, native speaker teachers who are teaching English in international contexts need to know the ways in which English is being used by their students in order to effectively teach English language in use. Instead, what we see in the teacher data are Anglo native-speaking teachers positioning themselves as cultural arbiters – making decisions about what constitutes English, and what is and isn’t appropriate content for Thai learners of English. English language use is reduced to the teachers’ own experiences with English language use with no recognition or consideration of other varieties of English including other so-called native English speaking countries. The teachers in the study positioned themselves as expert English language users in their classroom interactions drawing on and generalising from their own English language use to inform their teaching of the Conversation Strategies. Not only do native
speaker teachers of English assign themselves the role of English speaking ‘experts’, they construct Thai learners of English in particular, seemingly fixed, ways. This accords with Pennycook’s (1994) views that there is a tendency in the English language teaching profession to assign fixed, static and deterministic characteristics to particular cultures and to dismiss unfamiliar phrases or expressions as ‘not English’. The apparent gaps in teachers’ intercultural knowledge and capability have obvious implications for English language teacher education and the need to foreground intercultural awareness.

**Teachers’ Pedagogical Approaches**

In line with the coursebook analysis, teachers tended to mirror the Presentation, Practice, Production (PPP) focus of the coursebook in teaching the Conversation Strategies. All teachers presented the target language as dialogues either on the whiteboard (Owen and Matt), by performing the coursebook’s conversation model with student volunteers in front of the class (Zoe), by playing the audio of the conversation model (Emily), or by reading the conversation model dialogue to the class (Michael). Teachers followed the presentation of the target language with controlled pair work practice activities focusing on the target structures including drills and substitution activities either from the coursebook or using their own activities. Finally, teachers had students produce the target language in ‘freer’ ways through group work activities, role plays, skits, and freer discussion activities. The teachers’ pedagogy was predominantly teacher-fronted leaving little room for dialogue with students in terms of their own uses of English and any questions they might have regarding the use of the conversation strategies beyond the classroom.

PPP is seen as an extension of the behaviourist approach of audio lingualism and despite criticism it is still widely practised (J. Richards & Rodgers, 2014). It has been associated with teaching grammar and vocabulary, form-focused materials, and the weak version of Communicative Language Teaching outlined in Chapter Two. In light of more recent learning models based on sociocultural and cognitive theories, the PPP approach has been criticised for its fixed, linear teaching sequence; a tendency towards teacher-centredness; controlled introduction and practice of language structures; and limited opportunity to negotiate meaning. This raises the question of whether the PPP approach is compatible with teaching pragmatics, particularly given Verschueren’s (1999; 2009) pragmatic perspective, in which he...
argues that language use needs to be considered in terms of the full complexity of its cognitive, social, and cultural (i.e. ‘meaningful’) functioning. This accords with other researchers who have argued for a more nuanced approach to teaching spoken interaction, advocating a methodology that engages students in greater language awareness using authentic data which is presented in terms of choices that are relative to context and use (McCarthy & Carter, 1995; Rühlemann, 2008; Timmis, 2005).

**Discourse of Grammar**

The teacher data also found that teachers were constrained by what appears to be a dominant discourse of grammar and grammar teaching. While grammar features were rarely addressed explicitly by the teachers in their Conversation Strategy lessons, grammar appeared to be a pedagogical priority for all of the teachers. This sometimes resulted in their decision not to teach particular Conversation Strategies in order to have more time to focus on the unit’s grammar section. Although there was a pervasive discourse of grammar apparent in teachers’ discussion of English language teaching, only Zoe made a distinction between spoken and written grammar acknowledging that we don’t speak in the same way that we write. The teachers in this study did not demonstrate an awareness of how spoken and written grammar varied or the implications of this for teaching spoken interaction. This is in line with the view that, despite a substantial increase in corpus-based data over the last several decades, spoken language research has yet to filter into ELT practice in significant ways (Rühlemann, 2008; Timmis, 2005, 2012). While grammar was clearly a priority for teachers in this study, the grammatical complexity of some of the target phrases and the grammatical variation between the phrases from the Conversation Strategies were not explicitly taught in the classes I observed adding further support to the view that the teachers in this study may not be adequately prepared to teach the features of spoken grammar.

**Teachers’ Pragmatic Knowledge**

In presenting the Conversation Strategies, Matt and Michael drew students’ attention to pragmatic aspects of English language in use. However, their pragmatic explanations were drawn from their own experiences of using English in interactions and generalised as applicable across all contexts of English language use prescribing to students what constituted appropriate use of English. The assumption is that there
are universal norms of language use, an assumption which is not compatible with research such as Wannaruk’s (2008) which highlighted the differences between Thai refusals and American English refusals in her study of pragmatic transfer from Thai to English by Thai English language users. Furthermore, the teachers in the study rarely provided students with explanations about the meaning of particular phrases presupposing that students will interpret the phrases and expressions associated with the Conversation Strategies unproblematically. The implication is that these phrases and expressions will be interpreted and applied universally by students in line with the teachers’ own perception of language in use. The extent to which this is or is not the case will be explored in the next chapter.

Owen and Emily mentioned that pragmatic explanations may be useful for students. However, Owen did not seem to think that students would understand his explanations so he did not provide them. Emily did not provide explanations but this may have been due to her status as a new teacher raising the question of whether ELT teachers are equipped to teach the pragmatic features of English. This could be due to the emphasis given to pragmatics in English language teacher training programs. Sharpless and Vasquez (2009) found that while many post-graduate TESOL programs offer pragmatics electives or include pragmatics within different curriculum courses, methods of teaching pragmatics are rarely addressed in training programs. The teachers in this study reported that pragmatics was not a part of their training. Although some teachers demonstrated an awareness of some of the pragmatic nuances of language in use, the focus by teachers in teaching Conversation Strategies was on the linguistic structures that were foregrounded by the coursebook. Given the lack of focus on pragmatics in English language teacher training, particularly the teacher education courses attended by the teachers in this study, it could be that teachers did not have the pedagogical content knowledge of pragmatics to teach this part of the coursebook effectively.

**English Language Teacher Profiles and Motivations**

In addition to the teachers’ pedagogies and understandings of pragmatics, the identities of the teachers are also of interest. Michael is a long-term resident of Thailand and had been teaching for close to twenty years at the time of the study. In contrast, the identities of Owen, Matt, Zoe and Emily as English language teachers could be represented as migratory. We see this in the case of Owen who is semi-
retired and has been teaching English in Thailand six months out of the year since 2002, returning to Canada or travelling for the remainder of the year. At the time of the study, Matt had been teaching in Thailand for 2 years. Shortly after my data collection was completed he returned to the United States of America where he is no longer teaching English. Zoe had just started teaching in Thailand when I observed her. She had come from China where she taught for 3 months and planned to move to Japan to teach following a year of teaching in Thailand. Emily had moved to Thailand following her TESOL training in Cambodia and subsequent volunteer placement in a rural province in Thailand. She has since returned to the United States of America and is no longer teaching English. English language teachers in the field of TESOL have been referred to by Neilsen (2014) as ‘global nomads’ and ‘sojourners’ implying a degree of cultural investment and experience in negotiating linguistic and cultural difference. However, the teachers in this study demonstrated limited cultural investment in Thailand and appeared to be constrained in their capacity to negotiate cultural and linguistic differences beyond essentialised notions of Anglo-western and Thai cultures.

Matt, Zoe and Emily’s relatively short stay in Thailand has implications for their motivation and ability to develop knowledge and awareness of Thai culture and language which would otherwise equip them with useful skills for teaching pragmatics. Indeed, Matt, Zoe, and Emily all mentioned they had a low proficiency in Thai and little motivation to learn the language. As novice teachers in Thailand, Zoe and Emily were constrained in their ability to contextualise language use and provided students with generic contexts to practice the target language. However, a longer stay in Thailand did not necessarily result in a more nuanced understanding of Thai culture and English language use. Owen, Matt and Michael each expressed static, fixed views of Thai culture in their interviews. This may be due to a lack of engagement with Thai culture and language, and furthermore suggests an absence of intercultural awareness. The teacher interview data also revealed that all teachers in the study appeared to have limited knowledge of their students’ contexts of English language use with which to inform their teaching of the Conversation Strategies. In fact, many of the teachers said they did not think their students used English outside the classroom. Whether this is contested in the student data will be discussed further in the following chapter.
Of interest are the teachers’ self-reported language-learning experiences as noted in Table 5.2 in Chapter Five (see Section 5.4.1). Each of the teachers in the study reported learning and using other languages to varying degrees of proficiency including French, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, and Afrikaans. Yet despite their rich linguistic repertoires, the teachers appeared monolingual and mono-cultural. Ellis (2013) makes the point that it is the continued preference for the direct, English-only, method in the TESOL profession that position teachers’ other languages and language-learning experiences as invisible and without value. Despite the teachers’ own extensive language and cultural experiences, they were found in their interviews to be essentialising of culture as indicated through their language choices. The teachers chose to continually refer to established binaries between themselves and their students. Their references to students’ language were always through English and their English capacity. There was quite a consistent lack of uptake of Thai language and a lack of interest in learning Thai and adopting Thai cultural practices. In addition, the teachers appeared to have quite a resolute maintenance of English as their preferred language and associated Anglo-cultural practices despite living in Thailand.

The limited intercultural competency demonstrated by the teachers in the study highlights the need to address the role of intercultural awareness in teacher training and professional development. As noted in Chapter Five, each of the teachers had pursued English language teaching after studying a different first degree and then taking up a four week TESOL training course. TESOL courses, however, have been criticised in terms of their capacity to equip pre-service English language teachers with the kind of reflective and analytical tools central to developing and fostering intercultural competence highlighting a potential gap in teacher education (Baxter, 2003). Furthermore, the political economy of English language teaching is such that it is a transient profession influenced by the economic forces of supply and demand in which TESOL short courses are implicated. Indeed, none of the participating teachers appeared to see English language teaching as their full-time, permanent profession, including Michael who has been teaching for nearly twenty years.

**Teachers’ Perceptions of Students**

Another constraint to the teaching of pragmatics evident in the teacher data are teachers’ apparent deficit perceptions of students. According to Ford and Grantham
(2003, p. 217), “deficit thinking exists when educators hold negative, stereotypic, and counterproductive views about culturally diverse students and lower their expectations of these students accordingly.” Owen commented that his students would not be able to understand his explanations of differences between the exponents presented in the Conversation Strategies implying that his students would not be capable of understanding explanations beyond what is presented in the coursebook. Implicit in Matt’s comment that his students “familiarity with disagreeing is being quiet” is the belief that his students lack knowledge of and experience with other ways of disagreeing. Talk of student lack is problematic in that it signals a particular orientation to difference in which difference is measured unfavourably against a ‘superior’ dominant norm, in this case Anglo-western language use and proficiency. Comber and Kamler (2004) argue that teachers can move out of deficit discourses by turning around to their students, acknowledging their students’ life worlds and redesigning their pedagogical approaches accordingly. With respect to this study, in relation to teaching pragmatics, I argue that this could be achieved by teachers exploring students’ contexts of English language use, their cultural perspectives, and their conventions of language use.

7.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored pragmatics as it is represented by five teachers in a Thai English as a foreign language classroom context. It examines the teachers’ perspectives and approaches in general and then goes on to investigate their representations of structure, context, dynamics and salience in line with Verschueren’s (1999) pragmatic perspective. As Verschueren (1999) argues, all our linguistic choice-making is happening dynamically within particular contexts of use at varying degrees of salience. However, in line with the findings from the coursebook analysis, examination of the teacher data has shown that the representation of dynamics in English language use was compromised due to a tendency to decontextualize language or to generalise linguistic choices as being applicable across all contexts. Following the coursebook, teachers in this study provided students with limited explanations of key pragmatic concepts such as politeness and the negotiation of meaning. Instead, in the teaching of Conversation Strategies, pragmatics took the form of particular linguistic functions and their corresponding exponents presented in adjacency pairs. According to Verschueren
(1999), this is not pragmatics. As such, the coursebook and teachers provided students with an impoverished perspective of pragmatic ‘conversation’.

The inclusion of teachers’ interviews and classroom practices in this study provided teachers the opportunity to ‘talk back’ to the coursebook as a genre of governance. However, the analysis found that the teachers were constrained by the coursebook in its role as a genre of governance with the coursebook determining their methodology and linguistic focus. The teachers for the most part adopted the coursebook’s linguistic emphasis on conversational routines omitting those they perceive to be inappropriate based on their own experience of the phrases in use. They seldom taught social variables impacting on the interpretation and use of particular phrases and drew exclusively on the language in the Conversation Strategies presented in the coursebook to teach and represent English language in use. As such, the representation of the dynamics of English language in use was poor. The following chapter will explore the student accounts of English language in use as it is presented in *Hemispheres 2*, taught in the classroom and its applicability beyond the classroom.
In this chapter I turn to the students and explore how the students in the Thai English language classrooms of BELS respond to the teaching of English pragmatic features. The students I introduce in this chapter were in the classes of the teachers in Chapter Seven, who in turn were using the English language coursebook analysed in Chapter Six. The inclusion of student data in this study is important for two reasons. First, as this is a study of pragmatics, students in their role as English language users are central to understanding the relevance of the coursebook and teaching to their contexts of English language use. Secondly, as this is a teaching study, students’ accounts of the coursebook and classroom teaching as well as their own classroom practices constitute important contributions to ELT pedagogy with respect to pragmatics. This chapter then is the final data chapter in the presentation of the nested relationships between coursebook, the teachers, and the students. It is an attempt to interrogate the complexity of teaching, learning and pragmatics in an EFL context.

The focus in this chapter is how students understand and take up the pragmatic features of English as they are presented in *Hemispheres 2* and are taught in their classes. The previous data chapters were about the coursebook and the teachers’ engagement with it in terms of what is taught, what is not taught, and what is adapted and how. This chapter is about how the students make sense of the Conversation Strategies that are presented in the coursebook *Hemispheres 2* and their classes, and their understandings of the relevance of the Conversation Strategies to their English language use beyond the classroom. This focus involves the students’ reflections on the teaching of the Conversation Strategies in the coursebook and the classroom, their classroom practices, and their representations of their thoughts and ideas in our interviews. The aim of my analysis is to gain greater insights into how the students, who are local to Thailand with the lived understanding of using English in the Thai context, respond to the teaching priorities of the teachers, who are not Thai, and the coursebook. What are their prevailing uses of and needs for English beyond the classroom and how do they respond to the instruction in class? As noted in Chapter
Two, the teaching of English in many foreign language contexts is heavily characterised by foreign teachers, often native speakers of English, using a generic English Language Teaching (ELT) coursebook published in either the UK or the US. The analysis in this chapter is about the students as recipients of this globalised ELT practice: what are their responses; concerns; allowances; and adaptations?

Drawing across a finding from the previous chapter, this chapter examines how the students respond to the foregrounding of the linguistic in the teaching of Conversation Strategies, specifically their decisions about how they will use the target phrases and expressions presented in the book. The linguistic focus, that is, the emphasis by the coursebook and teachers on the functions and exponents presented in the Conversation Strategies, derives from Chapters Six and Seven which found that there was very little contextual information provided by the coursebook and teachers in the presentation of the Conversation Strategies. Both the coursebook and teachers emphasise the linguistic aspects of interaction as particular phrases and expressions associated with Conversation Strategies without addressing the contextual variables that constrain their use. From a Verschueren perspective this approach to teaching can be understood as prioritising the structure; however it does not address the important dimensions of context and dynamics. The conclusion in the previous chapters was that the teaching approaches together with the coursebook are impoverished in that they do not provide students with any sense of the dynamic interadaptability of structure and context in the making of linguistic choices. This chapter turns to the students and examines their responses to the situation.

In this chapter, I draw on Verschueren (1999) to make my argument that students’ contexts of English language use are pervasive and diverse. Verschueren’s (1999) emphasis on structure, context, dynamics and salience as comprising pragmatics is especially useful to my analysis as it allows me to think through how the pragmatic features of English are understood by students and applied (or not) beyond the classroom in diverse contexts. To this end, Verschueren’s (1999) conceptualisation of context and structure as dynamically interadaptable is generative for grasping how the coursebook and teachers’ linguistic emphasis is (re)contextualised by students in their linguistic choice-making. It is here also that Verschueren’s attention to salience is of value for informing why students’
representations and understandings of English language in use differ from the
coursebook and teacher representations.

This chapter begins with an exploration of the students’ contexts of English
language use, that is, how and where students in the study have used, are using, and
intend to use English (Section 8.1). This is followed by an examination of students’
uptake of the Conversation Strategies in *Hemispheres 2* and the classroom focusing
on which aspects of the Conversation Strategies they adopt, which aspects they
adapt, and which they ignore (Section 8.2). In Section 8.3, I discuss the key findings
from this chapter. I then conclude the chapter in Section 8.4.

### 8.1 STUDENTS’ CONTEXTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE USE

In this section, I explore the students’ contexts of English language use as
revealed in the interview data. I analysed the student interview data using
Verschueren’s (1999) notion of context, specifically the aspects of context that the
students as language users reported orienting to in their English language use.
Drawing on Fairclough’s (2001) method of CDA, my analysis in this section
includes descriptive, interpretative, and explanatory stages allowing me to move
from the descriptive data of the student interviews to make statements about the
social implications of students’ reported English language use.

Drawing on the interview data, I collated the students’ comments around their
English language use and summarised these into a table (see Appendix J). The audit
trail of my analysis can be found in the appendices: the Interview questions are in
Appendix F; a sample full interview transcript is in Appendix I; and the tabulated
summary of students’ reported contexts of English language use is in Appendix J.

As outlined in Chapter Five, the students in my study are all Thai English
language learners who are living and working or studying in Bangkok. While some
students share similarities in their experiences with English language use, there
appear to be many differences. My analysis of the teacher data revealed that the
teachers in the study refer to students collectively as belonging to a monolithic Thai
culture subverting any differences between students in terms of their understandings
of and experiences with English. However, the fifteen students in my study
mentioned a number of contexts in which they have used, are using or will use
English as outlined in Appendix F. These past, present and future uses of English are
not all ‘native speaker’ contexts, but include use of English with people from countries such as Vietnam, Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Germany. However, the contexts of English language use that are represented in *Hemispheres 2* and by teachers in my study appear to be assuming that Thai students will be using English with ‘native speakers’ of English in ‘native speaker’ contexts. Furthermore, the students’ contexts of English language use involve a variety of people and associated roles and relationships that would constrain their use of English. Yet analysis of the coursebook and teacher data revealed that these variables are not addressed in the coursebook and were not taught by teachers in the classroom. Given that the coursebook and teachers represent English language use as unrelated to contextual variables, it raises the question of how students can learn to use English appropriately and effectively in the diverse contexts in which they communicate through English.

In my analysis of the students’ contexts of English language use, several key findings emerged from the student interview transcripts which I explicate in the following subsections. First, I discuss the diversity and pervasiveness of English language use among the students in my study. I make the point that there is a significant discrepancy between the students’ self-reported use of English and the coursebook and teachers’ apparent views of their use. I then demonstrate the reality of ELF and the predominant regional focus of students’ English language use. I follow this with a discussion of the students’ perceptions of English language use in Thailand. Finally, I revisit teachers’ perceptions of students.

**Students’ diverse and pervasive use of English**

Table 8.1 below shows the diverse ways in which students in the study report that they use and intend to use English in their everyday lives. Contrary to the perceptions of teachers in the study and the assumptions apparent in the coursebook’s presentation of English language use, students reported using English in a variety of local, regional, and international contexts across diverse media with a variety of people, both ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ speakers of English including native speakers of Thai. They are not using or intending to use English exclusively with ‘native speakers’ of English in native English speaking countries.

<p>| Table 8.1 | Students’ reported uses of English |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries of use</th>
<th>Thailand, Hong Kong, Vietnam, the USA, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, the UK, France, Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Settings</td>
<td>Primary School, High School, University, Tourist areas of Bangkok, Hotels, Shopping Centres, Markets, Work, Home, Restaurants, Cinemas, English Language Schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Purposes of use                       | • Learning English  
• understanding university lectures  
• reading university textbooks  
• regional and international travel  
• customer service  
• helping tourists in Bangkok  
• emailing clients  
• meeting with clients  
• entertaining clients  
• communicating with friends and family  
• study abroad  
• communicating with work colleagues  
• socialising with colleagues  
• watching English language movies  
• reading billboards |
| Language users - Nationality          | Thai, Vietnamese, American, British, Indonesian, German, Japanese, Indian, Chinese, Malaysian, Singaporean, Australian, European |
| Roles/relationships                   | Student/Teacher, Friends, Daughter/Parents, Strangers, Designer/Client, Customer Service Assistant/Customer, Colleagues, Supervisor/Subordinate, Tourists, Girlfriend/Boyfriend, Flight attendant/passenger, Salesperson/Client, Cousins |
| Mode of interaction                   | Face to face, online chat, texting, email, skype, phone |

The table above indicates that students in this study have used, are using, or intend to use English in a variety of countries, across varied social settings, with a
range of people from different backgrounds, involving varied roles and relationships and different modes of interaction. Among these contexts of English language use, some are particularly surprising and unexpected. For example, Bee, a native speaker of Thai, uses English with her Thai friends and family code-switching between Thai and English. Bee’s family is a strong source of motivation and support for Bee to learn English. Her mother has completed the 16-level course at BELS and wants Bee to complete it as well. Bee mentioned that she and her family often speak English at home and that Bee sometimes uses English with international clients at her mother’s workplace, a Bangkok hotel. Bee uses English with her friends when they are socialising, also code-switching between Thai and English. Bee’s willingness to use English with her family and friends indicates that it is accepted and understood in those speech communities. Nam and May, also native speakers of Thai, mentioned using English to chat/text with their Thai friends. Chompoo works at a Japanese company in Bangkok and uses English to communicate with her Japanese supervisors. English is the language of communication in her workplace despite her supervisors being native speakers of Japanese. These findings illustrate students’ cultural dexterity. There appears to be a marked contrast between the intercultural engagement of the students who are code-switching between Thai and English, and using English as a lingua franca with other ‘non-native’ speakers of English, and that of the teachers who for the most part do not speak Thai and have not been living for an extended period in Thailand.

As discussed in Chapter Six, English language use is presented in Hemispheres 2 as being between native speakers of Standard American English in generic contexts that, while non-specific in terms of location, were widely understood to be American locations by students in the study. Furthermore, as highlighted in Chapter Seven, the teacher interview data showed that some of the teachers did not believe students would need or use English in Thailand unless communicating with native speakers of English. While the contexts of English language use mentioned by students in the study include ‘native speaker’ contexts, students’ reported contexts for using English extend well beyond communication with native English speakers in English-speaking countries. Overall, there is very little contextual correspondence between the English language use of students in this study and the English language use represented in the coursebook and classroom teaching. The coursebook and classroom teaching only
relates to a very narrow part of the students’ reported English language use. This raises the question of whether and how students are successfully able to relate the language use in the coursebook and classroom to their lives outside the classroom, a question which I will return to in Section 8.2.

Students’ use of English as a lingua franca

Table 8.1 reveals that students in the study are using English predominantly as a lingua franca. They are interacting with speakers whose first language is not English, and their English language interactions are taking place in countries where ‘native’ English speaking norms are not relevant. For example, Bomb reported using English to communicate with his German relative when he came to Thailand. Ning travelled to Bali for a vacation and used English to communicate with hotel staff from Bali and from Europe. Nui is interested in travelling to Paris once she finishes her Airline Business degree and sees this as a way to improve her English. Nui’s plans demonstrate her awareness that English is a globally recognised and used language, particularly as a lingua franca in countries with other first languages. Nam, Fah and Chompoo use English at their workplaces in Bangkok in order to communicate with their colleagues and clients who come from a variety of backgrounds including Japan, Vietnam, the United States, and India, again demonstrating the established use of English as a lingua franca. While the coursebook and teachers in my study are approaching the teaching of English language use exclusively from a ‘native speaker’ user perspective with no reference to international English language users, students in this study appear to be intending to use English in Thailand or in an international setting with other ‘non-native’ speakers. The prevalent use of English as a lingua franca (ELF), particularly in EFL contexts, was noted in Chapters 1 and 2 (Crystal, 2008; Jenkins et al., 2011). It was also noted that interactions in ELF are complex and require high levels of pragmatic awareness to navigate intercultural interactions effectively (House, 2010; Jenkins et al., 2011). Students’ pragmatic awareness will be discussed in Section 8.2.3.

Regional focus of English language use

The student data also revealed that the majority of English language interactions that students in the study were, are, or intend to be engaged in have a regional focus. This is perhaps not surprising given that English is considered to be the main lingua franca in Southeast Asia and is also the official language of the
Association of Southeast Asian Nationals (ASEAN) as noted in Chapter One (Kirkpatrick, 2014). Indeed, many students mentioned ASEAN as a motivation for learning English. This is in contrast to teachers who did not refer to ASEAN at all in their interviews revealing a further apparent gap in their awareness of students’ English language contexts.

The regional focus of English language use by many of the students in this study raises an important point regarding culture and English language use. As Kirkpatrick (2014) argues, English as an Asian lingua franca is being established in contexts which are non-Anglo-cultural, where the goal is mutual intelligibility rather than any association with ‘native’ English-speaking countries or their cultures such the United States, England, or Australia. Given that many global ELT coursebooks appear to provide students with ‘native speaker’ contexts and standard ‘native speaker’ varieties of English, teachers need to have adequate regional knowledge and intercultural awareness in order to be able to teach English that is compatible with students’ regional uses of English. The limited intercultural and regional knowledge demonstrated by the teachers in this study has implications for teacher education and professional development programs.

The discourse of ‘No English in Thailand’

While the preceding sections have established that English language use in Thailand is pervasive and diverse according to students’ self-reported uses, a surprising finding from the student interviews is that the students in this study do not appear to recognise that English is quite pervasive in Thailand. The students reported using English in diverse contexts with a variety of conversational partners. Yet several of these same students reported that they rarely use English in Thailand signalling what appears to be a significant misperception of their English language use. In comparison with their use of standard Thai, Thailand’s official language, students are certainly unlikely to be using English as often. As Nam noted in her first interview, “In Thailand, we usually speak Thai.” However, the students did not seem to recognise the multiple ways they use English when the data is showing that students reported using English to talk with tourists, watch English language movies, work, study, chat online, and code-switch with friends and family.

Notably absent in the teacher interview data and classroom observation data is any evidence of teachers’ awareness of students’ use of English outside the
classroom. With reference to Thailand and her students, Zoe commented that “here there is no real reason to practise English”. The implication is that her Thai students do not have a need to practise English. This is a belief that was echoed by other teachers in the school in casual staff room conversations. The seemingly prevalent discourse of ‘no English in Thailand’ contradicts teachers’ acknowledgements that they themselves do not need to use Thai in Bangkok because they can ‘get by’ using English. The teachers do not appear to recognise the multiplicities of their students’ English language use; they do not seem to be aware of their students’ needs or uses for English. In Matt’s words, if they are learning English to use now “They’re a little too late to the party in that case”. Matt’s comment reflects limited awareness of the prevalence of worldwide English language use and the global imperative to learn English. Moreover, the implication of the lack of ‘non-native’ speaker faces in the coursebook is that the coursebook does not see English being used in international contexts further contributing to the ‘no English in Thailand’ discourse. The deficit positioning of students as ‘non-users’ of English by the coursebook and teachers contrasts markedly with students’ reported actual use of English outside the classroom.

**Revisiting teachers’ perceptions of students**

The teacher data revealed that the teachers in the study tended to view the students as a collective with little if any consideration given to the students’ varied backgrounds and contexts of English language use. In contrast, the student data is showing substantial diversity and complexity in terms of their reported English language use. This is significant because teachers are making decisions about what students need and do not need in terms of English generalising across all students. Little consideration appears to have been given to the diverse motivations and intended English language uses of their particular students beyond the classroom. Furthermore, teachers are drawing on their own intuitions of English language use from their countries of origin as well as essentialist views of Thai culture to make decisions about what to teach. While ‘native speaker’ English language teachers are often valued for their ‘native speaker’ experience with and knowledge of English, the student data suggests this needs to be supplemented with a more nuanced understanding of English language use, one that moves beyond a monolithic Anglo-centric view of English and acknowledges the variation in English language use. As
the previous sections have shown, the students’ reported contexts of English language use are predominantly with other ‘non-native’ speakers of English in countries where Anglo-cultural norms do not necessarily apply and therefore the ‘native speaker’ teachers’ contexts of English language use may not be relevant.

8.1.1 Summary

In this section, I have outlined how the students in this study reported using English in diverse and pervasive ways. Contrary to the ‘native speaker’ focus of the coursebook, the majority of students’ English language use appears to be as a lingua franca with a regional focus. Despite the diverse and pervasive use of English reported by students in this study, it appears that students have taken up a discourse of no English where they do not recognise the multiple ways they are using English. In addition, teachers do not appear to recognise the varied ways students reported using English outside the classroom. This is significant because teachers are making pedagogical decisions based on a collective understanding of students when in fact the student data has revealed a much more complex and nuanced picture of students’ apparent English language use. Moreover, the coursebook has been marketed as an ‘international edition’, presumably designed with its international audience and their English language use in mind. However, English language use is presented in *Hemispheres 2* as being between ‘native speakers’ of Standard American English in generic contexts with no defining characteristics that might point to international locations and English language users. The significant disparity between what is taught through the coursebook and classroom and how students appear to actually be using English outside the classroom raises questions of what students do with what they are taught. How do students respond to the Conversation Strategies and associated classroom teaching and what guides their linguistic choices? These are questions which will be explored further in the following section.

8.2 RECONTEXTUALISING PRAGMATICS: STUDENTS’ UPTAKE OF THE CONVERSATION STRATEGIES

In this section, I examine the student data in terms of the students’ uptake of the Conversation Strategy section through the coursebook and the classroom teaching. As with the teachers in this study, the meaning of pragmatics in the Conversation Strategy section of *Hemispheres 2* is transformed by different English language learners as it is taught by particular teachers in different classrooms. What
is taken up by students in recontextualising the coursebook and teaching is a key aspect of understanding student agency, as well as their knowledge of pragmatics. Analysis reveals what is valued in the students’ recontextualisation of pragmatics in their learning of the Conversation Strategies. Given that language use is contextual, do students see the contexts from the coursebook and classroom activities as useful and relevant for their English language use outside the classroom? Furthermore, as Hemispheres presents the Conversation Strategies in generic contexts and the teachers in this study are native English speakers with a limited understanding of Thai English language use, are students able to adapt the Conversation Strategies to their contexts of use beyond the classroom? While an investigation of students’ actual English language use outside the classroom is beyond the scope of this study, students’ decision making and reported use with respect to the Conversation Strategies offers insight into how students recontextualise pragmatics in the Conversation Strategies. As with the previous chapter, Fairclough’s (2003) recontextualising principles underpin the analysis of how students recontextualise pragmatics – in particular, which elements of the Conversation Strategies are included and excluded; how students order the Conversation Strategies; how much they generalise from the Conversation Strategies; and what is added in their representations of the Conversation Strategies. I follow Fairclough’s (2001) analytic method of description, interpretation and explanation. In the following subsections, I draw on the student interviews as well as classroom observations to explore students’ responses to the Conversation Strategy section of Hemispheres 2 and associated classroom activities, as well as students’ interpretations, learning and use of the Conversation Strategies. Similar to Chapter Seven, in the classroom extracts, the students’ and teachers’ turns are marked as their pseudonym. Turns by other students are shown as Student; when a number of students are involved, their turns are Student 1 and Student 2. In the interview extracts, the students’ turns are marked as their pseudonym and mine as researcher and interviewer are ‘AS’. In cases where students’ or teachers’ names are mentioned, I have replaced them with pseudonyms.

8.2.1 Students’ Responses to the Conversation Strategies

The key finding I elucidate here is the students’ orientation toward putting English to use through their engagement with the Conversation Strategies. Thematic analysis of the student interview data revealed that students are making connections
between the Conversation Strategies and their everyday lives, adapting the generic contexts of the coursebook and the classroom to other situations outside the classroom, and using the Conversation Strategies to make meaning of what they see as English culture. In addition, students are applying the Conversation Strategies to their own contexts of English language use and focusing on talk-in-interaction. I now address each of these in turn.

**The relevance of Conversation Strategies to students’ everyday lives**

Many of the students mentioned that they found the Conversation Strategies useful because of their connection to their daily lives and everyday interactions. Some students were actively using some of the phrases from the Conversation Strategies outside the classroom. For example, Bee and Nam both reported using the phrases from the Conversation Strategy *Using Exclamations to Express Opinions* with their Thai friends. Other students saw the Conversation Strategies as useful for future work or travel. For example, Chompoo could see the possibility of using the Conversation Strategy *Asking about and Expressing Preferences* to discuss document layout preferences with her bosses. Furthermore, while many students did not necessarily see themselves as using the Conversation Strategies in their day-to-day interactions at the time of the study, they repeatedly made connections between the Conversation Strategies presented in the coursebook and the everyday conversations that they had in Thai. Students were actively applying the Conversation Strategies to their own contexts of language use. That students found the Conversation Strategies useful also suggests that students could see themselves using the Conversation Strategies in their English language interactions. Students appear to want language they can put to use, that is, pragmatics. This finding contradicts the views of several of the teachers in the study who questioned the relevance and appropriacy of many of the Conversation Strategies for the students in their class.

**Adapting the contexts of the coursebook and the classroom**

Indeed, students demonstrated proficiency and creativity in adapting the contexts of the coursebook for their own purposes. The students did not appear to be concerned with the generic American middle class contexts presented in the coursebook that were deemed inappropriate by some of the teachers. In fact, Nam and Wan mentioned that the context of discussing seat preferences on an airplane could easily be applied to a train or a bus illustrating that students are engaged in the
process of recontextualising the Conversation Strategies for their own use in contexts outside the classroom. Furthermore, in reference to the Conversation Strategy *Keeping in Touch*, Bee said that she uses similar functions in Thai, such as when working with other students on a university project. The students appeared to be comparing the Conversation Strategies with another situation of use outside the classroom, whereas teachers chose to recontextualise the Conversation Strategies using generic situations for inside the classroom. In this way, the students in this study appear to be much more attuned to the practical application of the language than the teachers.

**Learning ‘English’ culture**

Some of the students in the study saw the Conversation Strategies as an opportunity to learn about what they understood to be ‘English’ culture. For example, Fon made the following comments about the Conversation Strategy *Starting Conversations* in our interview:

AS: So do you think these two conversations would be useful for you? The first one, have a look, have a better look at that. So that one’s...

Fon: I think every conversation is, have the good. It’s a...

AS: Yeah? What do you mean?

Fon: I mean every conversation make you make I make me to practice to listen and I like culture so I can know about English culture from every conversation.

AS: Excellent so that’s interesting. So what do you see in here about English-speaking culture?

Fon: Hmm. In Thai you can’t sit like this when you sit with an older and I think boys and girls in Thai cannot close up like this.

AS: Sit this closely?

Fon: Yes.

(Fon: Interview 1, 15/12/12)

In the excerpt above, Fon suggests that the photograph in the Conversation Strategy *Starting Conversations* (see Section 6.4) reflects English culture. The analysis of this Conversation Strategy in Chapter Six found that the messages portrayed in the photograph were incompatible with, and perhaps more salient than, the language that was presented. As outlined in Chapter Seven, the teachers Owen
and Matt chose not to teach this Conversation Strategy. Owen said he thought the context was not culturally relevant to Thai students sharing similar views to Fon (see Section 7.2). While Owen and Fon appear to share the same perceptions regarding Thai culture with respect to the context of this Conversation Strategy, their beliefs reflect a view of culture that is fixed, static and homogenous. Fon sees the Conversation Strategies as a gateway into culture. However, because, as the teachers Owen and Matt chose not to teach this Conversation Strategy, there was no opportunity to explore notions of culture more deeply in the classroom.

**Applying the Conversation Strategies**

Another Conversation Strategy that was not taught by the teachers in the study was *Agreeing and Disagreeing*. Matt said that he did not think Thais liked to disagree (see Section 7.2). However, as the following interview excerpt with Chompoo shows, this Conversation Strategy has significant practical applications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AS:</th>
<th>What about agreeing and disagreeing? This one here. So they’re talking about ways of disagreeing and ways of agreeing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chompoo:</td>
<td>Hmm hmm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS:</td>
<td>Would that be useful for you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chompoo:</td>
<td>Hm, yes because I can know about what the other people think and I will try to think again about I agree or disagree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS:</td>
<td>Hmm. Hmm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chompoo:</td>
<td>Hmm hmm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS:</td>
<td>At work do you have the opportunity to talk about things you disagree with?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chompoo:</td>
<td>Hmm. Like I working with a shipping line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS:</td>
<td>Uh huh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chompoo:</td>
<td>My boss will ask me if I booking the Western line to China I will use this western line, do you agree or not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS:</td>
<td>Ah, okay. So you want to make sure that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chompoo:</td>
<td>Hmm hmm. “I have to check one second I will tell you later.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Chompoo: Interview, 16/12/12)

In this excerpt, Chompoo is directly applying the Conversation Strategy *Agreeing and Disagreeing* to a specific situation at her workplace. The excerpt demonstrates that this particular Conversation Strategy is useful and highly relevant.
for her. The excerpt also demonstrates a significant contrast between the teachers’ perspectives and students’ perspectives of the Conversation Strategies in terms of their relevance and potential usefulness for students. It shows the implications of teachers’ essentialised views of culture and highlights the importance of teachers being aware of their students’ contexts and uses of English outside the classroom. Furthermore, it demonstrates how students’ contexts could be used as a resource by teachers to teach English language in use. However, in this study, there was no evidence of students’ contexts being acknowledged within the classroom.

**The importance of talk-in-interaction**

The coursebook analysis revealed that English language use was reduced to sets of functional exponents presented in adjacency pairs in a conversation fragment. Yet students found this presentation of the Conversation Strategies useful due to its emphasis on structure. Fai and Bee mentioned that they found the sequential arrangement of the Conversation Strategies helpful, that is, the presentation of the Conversation Strategies in turns of adjacency pairs. This demonstrates that students are aware of turn-taking in interaction and that while certain phrases and expressions might be useful on their own, students also wanted to know how to respond to particular phrases and expressions in conversation. Students’ concern with talk-in-interaction further supports the view that students are interested in putting language to use.

**Summary**

The students’ responses to the Conversation Strategies demonstrate that the students in this study are oriented towards pragmatics, that is, putting English to use in context rather than just learning isolated pieces of language in the form of phrases or expressions. In Bee’s words, the Conversation Strategy section is “very important. It have grammar, vocab and how to use it in real life, how to apply it to life.” Verschueren (1999) makes the point that meaning making is informed by interpretation frames provided by speech activity or event types which are products of complex processes of socialisation. I argue that the students are interpreting the Conversation Strategies from the perspective of being *language users* rather than *language learners* (Cook, 2002). Their predominant interpretive frame for the Conversation Strategies appears to be language in use, that is, pragmatics, rather than English grammar or vocabulary learning activities. As such, the students are drawing
on their everyday experiences of spoken interaction in Thai and English to make meaning of the Conversation Strategies. They are making connections to their lives and contexts, adapting and applying the Conversation Strategies to their own contexts. However, Chapter Six showed that the coursebook provides students with little in the way of pragmatic information and Chapter Seven highlighted that teachers chose to contextualise language use for the classroom rather than make connections with students’ lives outside the classroom. This raises questions of how students go about interpreting and learning to use the Conversation Strategies presented in the coursebook and applying it to their lives outside the classroom. I explore this in the following two sections.

8.2.2 Students’ Classroom Practices

As noted in Chapter Seven, the teachers have a powerful role as mediators of Hemispheres 2 in their teaching of its content. As such, students’ responses to the teachers and their classroom practices is significant as it shows how students are constrained by and also contest the representations of English language use made by teachers in the classroom. In the previous chapter, I explored the teachers’ presentation of the conversation strategies and associated classroom activities. In this section, I shift my focus to the students to show how students took up their roles in the teacher-designed tasks. I also demonstrate how some students contest the teachers’ construction of their own identities, and transform the teachers’ authoritative discourse into a discourse of self-relevance.

I draw on the video-recorded transcripts of the classroom interactions as well as students’ accounts in their interviews to explore students’ classroom practices. My analysis here is informed by Goffman’s (1981) production roles of the animator, the author and the principal which were defined in detail in Chapter Four. As a brief summary, the animator refers to the speaker in action with the emphasis on the performance of speaking; the author is the originator of the words; and the principal is one whose views are represented by the words uttered. I organise the section according to students’ involvement in the classroom activities – modelling, practising and producing the Conversation Strategies – and how they suggest, adapt and avoid topics.
Modelling and practising the Conversation Strategies

As shown in the previous chapter, the teachers in the study used the coursebook activities or designed their own classroom activities to teach and practise the Conversation Strategies. In some cases, these activities prescribed students’ output, with students reproducing orally the written words from the coursebook or what was written on the whiteboard. Student’s roles in these cases are similar to that of the ‘animator’ but not the ‘author and/or principal’ of an utterance in Goffman’s (1981) configuration of speaking roles. In the excerpts presented in this section, I show how students took up teacher-designed/assigned roles. The teachers assigned these roles to the students through the conventional IRF classroom discourse pattern as well as through their directive discourse in setting up the controlled practice classroom activities. As such, students’ roles in these activities were subject to the teachers’ design, designation, sanction and evaluation.

For example, in his classes Owen modelled an oral drill practice activity for the Conversation Strategy *Asking about and Expressing Preferences* using topic cards with Fai. The target language was on the whiteboard in the form of a dialogue with A denoting the first speaker and B denoting the second speaker.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn #</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Fai, what does your card say?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fai</td>
<td>[holds up card]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Ok. [gestures for Fai to begin]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Fai</td>
<td>Which do you like... What...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>[gestures to the wb] We’ll just stick to the top three.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Fai</td>
<td>What is your preference, school or work? [reading from the whiteboard]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>School. I prefer... my preference is school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Fai</td>
<td>Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>It’s so easy. [everyone laughs] How about you? What’s your preference, school or work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Fai</td>
<td>I like school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Fai</td>
<td>Because I think it’s easy too.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In turn 3, Fai was assigned the role of A through Owen’s use of gestures which she attempts to take up in turn 4. Owen’s response in turn 5 directs Fai’s choice of the target language. In turns 6-12 what we see is a scripted modelling of the dialogue by Fai and Owen. Of interest is Fai’s automatic uptake of her role in modelling the dialogue according to Owen’s design which is a consistent feature of the classroom practices of the students in the study. Students were found to respond in accordance with the teachers’ directions in undertaking each of the controlled modelling and practice activities. For example, when asked to practise the conversation dialogue from the coursebook in pairs, students took turns reading the dialogue with a partner. In this way, students’ speaking roles were restricted to that of ‘animator’ with their words originating from the coursebook or the teacher. This demonstrates the power of the teachers and coursebook in prescribing students’ English language use in the classroom.

A notable exception to following the teacher’s directions is the example given in the previous chapter of a student providing an authentic answer which did not fit the teacher-designed dialogue. The excerpt is presented again below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn #</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Which do you like – just this phrase – “which do you like better…?” Ok “I like”. Do some practice. Which do you like better, coke or pepsi? Which do you like better, coke or pepsi?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>I like both.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Choose one, today. You must choose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Okay, I like coke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Coke tastes good er better than Pepsi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In turn 2, the student provides an authentic response taking up an agentive role as ‘author’ or ‘principal’ rather than ‘animator’ of the utterance. However, as noted in the previous chapter, this role was rejected by Owen in turn 3 and the student then cooperatively returns to the ‘animator’ role in turns 4 and 5. In terms of pragmatics, the students’ uptake of an ‘author’ or ‘principal’ role in turn 2 could be seen as attempting to transform their teacher-designed identity from that of student to that of language user highlighting the potentially restrictive nature of the ‘animator’ role.
with respect to learning language use. Furthermore, in providing what is presumably an authentic response, the student is drawing on their own context underscoring the central role of context in language use and its relevance to language learning. Instances such as these demonstrate opportunities for teachers and students to reshape the power relationships in the classroom and, addressed as such, could contribute to students’ identities as increasingly competent and effective language users.

**Producing the Conversation Strategies**

In more ‘communicatively’ oriented activities, the students were afforded more freedom to express their intentions, feelings and ideas within a given target language structure. In the excerpts presented in this section, I show how students were able to take up more agentive speaking roles in the freer practice activities, highlighting potential gaps in their pragmatic knowledge and learning. For example, in Matt’s classroom practice activity for the Conversation Strategy *Asking About and Expressing Preferences*, students were mingling and asking each other questions from the handout Matt had produced (see Appendix H). Two students had the following interaction:

Student 1  Would you like to get plastic surgery or stay natural?

Student 2  I would like to stay natural because I have talked to many people, many girls, and I think they not stay natural and they not confident in themselves.

Of interest here are the students’ language choices. While they have used the topic from Matt’s handout, they have not taken up his suggested language structure “Would you rather…?” and “I would rather…” Instead, they used “Would you like…” and “I would like…” Why have the students not taken up Matt’s suggested language structure? Other students in their interviews commented that the meaning of ‘rather’ was not clear to them and is therefore not a structure they would use. For example, Fai commented in her interview that she did not know the meaning of ‘rather’ and Nam said she would not use ‘rather’ as the meaning was not clear. Despite being foregrounded by the coursebook and teachers as a preferred language choice in the Conversation Strategy *Asking About and Expressing Preferences*, the coursebook did not clarify the meaning of ‘rather’ and neither of the teachers I observed teaching the Conversation Strategy explained the meaning of ‘rather’.
While the students in the above lesson extract have taken up speaking roles as ‘authors’ and ‘principals’ in their interaction, in terms of syntax and lexis, their language choices could be more accurate. In the context of the classroom activity, what they are saying makes sense and would probably be understood in other contexts. However, “would you like” is most commonly used in offers and could also be misinterpreted as such in interactions outside the context of this lesson. Indeed, one of the students in the study commented that she understood the coursebook conversation model for this Conversation Strategy as an offer for a window seat by the speaker rather than a conversation about preferences underscoring the ambiguity of the language choices in relation to the language functions being portrayed. The data presented here demonstrates that it is not sufficient for teachers to model and provide students with repetitive practice activities for the target language in order for students to put it to use. Rather, it highlights the need for teachers to consider how language is being understood by their students in terms of its use in context, in and beyond the classroom, and to provide explicit instruction where the meaning and use of phrases are not clear. Such metapragmatic explanations were rarely observed being given by the teachers in the study and none of the teachers in the study were observed asking students what was new or familiar language for them from the Conversation Strategies. House (1996) found that metapragmatic information is a key contributing factor in enhancing students’ overall pragmatic fluency in an additional language. Given that students in this study appear to be oriented toward the contextual use of English, metapragmatic explanations would be of significant value in terms of the students’ use of English in various contexts outside the classroom.

The effects of the absence of metapragmatic information in the coursebook and in the teachers’ classroom practices is further exemplified in the following excerpt in which students are presenting a skit they created using the Conversation Strategy *Using Exclamations to Express Opinions*. Emily had given each group a topic and told them to create a skit based around the topic using language from the Conversation Strategy. In the following excerpt, the group had been given the topic of getting married to someone they had just met:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn #</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
This excerpt is of interest in terms of several pragmatic variables. The student in their first turn introduces their news somewhat abruptly without any opening that might signal that he is about to share some important news. The absence of an opening move to introduce the conversation topic means that the viewers, the other students in the class, do not have a clear sense of what has been said to make the students’ turn okay in the conversation. It could also imply that the move Student 1 makes in turn 1 works without an opener. The absence of openings and closings in the conversation models in the coursebook was noted in Chapter Six and appears to have been taken up here by the students in this activity. Openers such as ‘Guess what?’ to introduce the sharing of news were not introduced by Emily in modelling the activity. In modelling the activity, Emily elicited the introduction of ‘Hi’ from the class before the person in the first turn went on to share their news. Furthermore, the way Student 1 shares his news in the above excerpt is explicit and detailed, whereas in everyday conversation the details might be shared over several turns. The absence of this kind of metapragmatic information in Emily’s teaching and in the coursebook meant that the group members were not provided with the necessary knowledge of the pragmatic features of English to create a conversation that took these variables into consideration.

A further point in the excerpt above is the relationships shared between the speakers. It is not clear how well the people in the conversation know each other and how that might impact the conversation. It appears that Mod and Student 2 do not
know Student 1’s fiancé and it also seems that they have not seen Student 1 in at least three months or that he has not talked about his relationship in that time. It raises the question of his relationships with Mod and Student 2 and how well they know each other in terms of Student 1 being able to share the type of news he is sharing. The comments made by Student 2 and Mod in turns 8-10 seem to point to a close existing relationship contradicting their lack of contact and interpersonal knowledge. Social variables such as social relationships and the sensitivity of sharing risky personal news which refer to the dynamics of language use were not aspects discussed by the teacher in presenting the activity. The previous chapter revealed that the appropriacy of discussing particular topics in various contexts was not discussed by the teachers. Emily’s topics in this activity appear to have been guided by the unit theme *On the Edge*. However, in presenting the topics she did not ask the students the kind of risky activities they would share, with whom they would share them, and under what circumstances. In this way, the students’ dialogues were not grounded in their own contexts but were constrained by the coursebook theme and Emily’s topic choices for them.

**Suggesting, adapting and avoiding topics**

In other activities, students were proactive in making links to their contexts through their own topic suggestions, and through the avoidance and adaptation of controversial topics. For example, in Matt’s lesson on the Conversation Strategy *Asking about and Expressing Preferences*, Fah suggested the topic of couriers, DHL and Fed-ex, for discussing preferences. In her interview, Fah explained that she had recently had to compare the two courier companies for her job. Fah’s topic choices are related to her own context of English language use outside the classroom and demonstrate her agency in taking up a discourse of self-relevance. Students also adapted topics in classroom activities. For example, Bee adapted the question of sexual preference in Matt’s freer practice activity for *Asking about and Expressing Preferences*. Instead of asking “Do you prefer a man or a woman?” as outlined on Matt’s handout, Bee asked another female student in the class, if they preferred a straight man or a gay man as a friend. It could be that Bee was avoiding the question of sexual preference given that the topic is often considered taboo or that she already knew her classmate’s sexual preference. Nonetheless, her adaptation of the topic
demonstrates her agency and creativity in using the Conversation Strategy and assigned topic to ask her own question about preferences.

In terms of controversial topics that were raised in the classroom, several students mentioned in their interviews that they avoided discussing those topics in the classroom activities. For example, with respect to discussing the ‘red shirt’ protests in Michael’s lesson on the Conversation Strategy Discussing Opinions, most students commented that they found the topic too difficult to talk about in the class activity and changed the topic if it came up in conversation. The students’ decision making in this activity appears to have been influenced by pragmatic concerns in terms of their social relationships with their classmates; concerns that were not considered by the teacher in assigning the topic. In choosing to change the topic assigned by the teacher, students were transforming the authoritative discourse of the classroom to one that had their own pragmatic concerns at its centre. In order to explore students’ pragmatic concerns in more detail, I now look at how students made meaning of the linguistic choices made available to them in the Conversation Strategies.

8.2.3 Students’ Linguistic Choice-making: Interpreting, Learning and Using the Conversation Strategies

Apparent in students’ linguistic choice-making from the Conversation Strategies are several consistent themes that relate to pragmatics. The central themes that emerge are: the significance of students’ prior English language exposure; the use of Thai as a linguistic and pragmatic resource; students’ interpretations of pragmatics; the importance of semantic knowledge; prioritising mutual understanding; and the importance of choice. I discuss the recurrent themes in the following subsections drawing on segments of the student interviews to illustrate key points. The analysis and findings in this section are underpinned by an understanding of the entire corpus of data.

The significance of students’ prior English language exposure

Of note in this study is that most students did not appear to be interested in learning new phrases from the Conversation Strategy sections. Their primary focus appeared to be on learning to use phrases they were already familiar with. Most students in the study reported choosing to use phrases that were familiar to them either through prior learning or exposure to the phrases because they were easier to
remember. As Chompoo stated, “If I see it before, I will remember it and I can use it easily. If I’m not used to it,... I cannot remember.” (Chompoo: Interview 1, 16/12/12)

Nam’s linguistic choices in the following interview extract further exemplify this:

AS: So then these phrases here you’ve got um “I don’t know whether to, I don’t know if I should, I can’t decide if I should” which one would you use do you think? Which one would you try to remember?

Nam: “I don’t know if I should” I think it’s easy to remember.

AS: Okay.

Nam: And I used to learn about this before BELS.

AS: Ah, before here.

Nam: Before BELS.

AS: So even so you’ve learned it before…

Nam: And I can remember.

(Nam: Interview 2, 7/4/13)

In the excerpt above, Nam is making the point that phrases she has learned before are easier to remember and are more likely to be phrases she would try to remember and use. That Nam, and other students in the study, preferred to use phrases from the Conversation Strategies is of interest because it highlights a potential gap in the teaching of the Conversation Strategies. In the previous chapter, the teacher data revealed that the teachers in the study did not draw on students’ knowledge of English to teach the Conversation Strategies. Indeed, it appeared that they had limited awareness of their students’ English language use. Yet, this kind of awareness is widely considered essential in order to be able to extend students’ language learning (Lantolf & Beckett, 2009). The teacher-centred classroom discourse and predominantly decontextualized activities did not appear to make new phrases salient pointing to a further gap in teachers’ awareness regarding the important role of negotiating meaning in language learning (Long, 1983). In the absence of opportunities to negotiate meaning in the classroom, and extend their existing knowledge, most students strategically relied on their prior knowledge of and experience with English to inform their linguistic choices.

Students also referred to the use of television series and movies to enhance their English language learning. This is evident in the following excerpt from Wan’s interview:
AS: When you say that you will use one phrase that people often use, are you talking about your experience here in Thailand, in terms of what you learned at school, or university, or here at BELS?

Wan: The sentence?

AS: Yeah.

Wan: That I hear?

AS: Yeah.

Wan: I hear from... I like to see the series... the movies...

AS: Ah. Yes, yes, yes.

Wan: That have more conversation and I can hear about what people to say or something like that.

AS: Ah, so you pay attention a lot to... are they American series?

Wan: Yes.

AS: Which series do you like to watch?

Wan: Prison Break, or Gossip Girl or something like that.

(Wan: Interview 2, 16/2/13)

Movies and television series provide Wan with a snapshot of real life. In the absence of contextual information in the coursebook and by the teacher in the classroom, Wan is drawing on movies and television series to enhance her understanding of how the conversation strategies are used in context.

Students’ reliance on their prior knowledge of English to make decisions about what to learn and use from the Conversation Strategies could be explained by Verschueren’s (1999) notion of salience. Salience involves several mental processes in the minds of language users. Of significance here is the mental process of memory as manifested in processes of recognition and recall. In Chapter Six, I made the point that what is salient to students from the Conversation Strategies in terms of the exponents presented is constrained by their ability to recognise and recall the particular phrases and expressions as learners of English as a foreign language. Therefore, students need to be strategic, choosing to remember or use one or two of the phrases rather than several.

I would argue that the classroom activities needed to be grounded in students’ contexts of language use in order to be more salient to students. The important role of context in language learning is underscored by comments made by Bee in her
interview, one of few students who tried to learn new phrases from the Conversation Strategies. “I will remember all of this if I ever met the same situation it can make me remember.” For her, the situation or context appears to be a key feature in her ability to remember the phrases presented in the Conversation Strategy. According to Verschueren (1999), processes of perception and representation, which include processes of contextualisation, interact with memory to influence the status particular language choices have in a language users’ mind. As such, context could be a significant contributing factor in learning new phrases and expressions. For this reason, coursebooks and teachers need to be especially cognisant of the contexts that are used to present and teach English language use ensuring they align with students’ contexts of use outside the classroom. As previously noted, the teachers in this study did not appear to be familiar with their students’ prior English experience or contexts of English language use. Given students’ limited exposure to pragmatics in the coursebook and the classroom, students may not be aware of the applicability of their language choices in diverse contexts.

**Using Thai as a linguistic and pragmatic resource**

Several students in the study mentioned the similarity to Thai as their justification for learning or remembering particular English phrases from the Conversation Strategies. For example, Ning made the following comments regarding her choice of phrases to remember from the Conversation Strategy *Helping People Make Decisions*:

AS: So what about um these four here – don’t you think you should, wouldn’t it be better to, doesn’t it make more sense to, what if you?
Ning: “Don’t you think you should?”
AS: Ah okay.
Ning: Um, “don’t you think”... it can er... Thai people will translate
English in Thai.
AS: Ah okay.
Ning: Always.
AS: Always.
Ning: Always and it is similar to Thai.

(Ning: Interview 1, 30/3/13)
In the above excerpt, Ning is responding to a question of which phrase or phrases she would most likely try to remember or use from the Conversation Strategy. Ning’s comments demonstrate that she is using Thai as a resource to make meaning of the phrases in the Conversation Strategy. The importance of Thai as a linguistic resource for learning English is underscored in Bee’s comments below:

AS: So what about the situation here, was this useful...
Bee: Yes.
AS: To understand the conversation or...?
Bee: I think it’s useful but some phrases I can’t understand because it’s hard to hard to translate in Thai.

(Bee: Interview 3, 31/3/13)

From the perspective of language learning and cognitive load, it is much easier to remember phrases that can be translated somewhat into the L1 or that are familiar to students due to prior exposure. However, this also raises the questions of whether English phrases that are similar to Thai can be used in interactions in the same way to achieve the same effects and whether students are aware of potential differences. The student data suggests that English phrases cannot always be used in the same way as Thai as demonstrated in Bee’s comments below that highlight what she sees as important pragmatic differences between English and Thai:

AS: ...And in Thai, when you’re saying no, do you have sort of similar language?
Bee: Some phrases is similar but Thai is more information, a little information more than English.
AS: Ah. So in Thai you give, you don’t give so much information, you just say...
Bee: No, no, no. In Thai people in Thai when say no always say a lot of information but graju grajik. Do you know?
AS: No I don’t know that. But I’ll look it up. Or if you want to look it up. Thank you.
Bee: This word.
AS: Ah. So trying to make it more, like not really important information, but because they feel bad, yeah?
Bee: Yes.
AS: They feel like they have to give more information than really they need to.
Bee: Yes.
AS: I understand.
Bee: Because Thai, in Thai words is more than English words I think.

(Bee: Interview 2, 9/2/13)

Bee’s comments reflect findings from research into cross-cultural pragmatics such as Wannaruk’s (2008) aforementioned study of refusals in Thai and American English which found that pragmatic differences do exist between Thai and American English. Wannaruk (2008) highlighted the need to explore sociolinguistic norms that underpin language use in order to avoid pragmatic transfer and possible misinterpretations and miscommunication in language use. How then do students interpret the pragmatic features of English? Are they able to make the kinds of comparisons demonstrated by Bee in her comments above? Are their prior experiences with English useful in interpreting the pragmatic features of English?

Interpreting the pragmatic features of English

The students in this study were found to be actively engaged in attempting to make pragmatic sense of the Conversation Strategies. The interview data found that some of the students recognised that different phrases are more suitable for some situations than others. In the following excerpt Bee is talking about the Conversation Strategy Expressing Sympathy and Concern. Bee’s comments demonstrate her concern with the appropriacy of a phrase for a particular context or situation:

AS: Which one of these would you use do you think in this situation?
Bee: Which one?
AS: Hmm.
Bee: I think ‘what’s wrong?’.
AS: What’s wrong? More than the other ones?
Bee: Hmm.
AS: Yeah?
Bee: Yes.
AS: Why?
Bee: Because this - her face is like something wrong.
AS: Ah, so you’re thinking you want to find out what that is?
Bee: Yes.
In addition, Bee along with several other students, made the point that this particular Conversation Strategy is one that they would use exclusively with friends and family signalling their awareness of making linguistic choices that are appropriate to their social relationships in a given context. Within other Conversation Strategies, students in the study often noted differences between particular phrases in terms of their appropriacy for particular relationships and contexts. For example, in relation to the phrases in the Conversation Strategy Offering, Accepting, and Refusing Invitations, Wan made the following delineation: “I think ‘do you want to come?’ is about friends….but ‘would you care to join us?’ is about the older people or the older position than me.” This example shows how Wan is aware that different phrases can be used with different people in different contexts. Indeed, several students noted nuances in politeness within sets of phrases as indicated by May in the excerpt below.

AS: So you think this phrase here suits this situation much better or the best of these three?
Bee: Yes.

(May: Interview, 18/5/13)

However, while students were generally aware that there were pragmatic differences between the phrases in the Conversation Strategies, they did not always...
interpret the ‘politeness’ of phrases accurately. In the following example, Nam
describes her logic for understanding the coursebook’s organisation of politeness:

AS: How do you decide which ones to remember?
Nam: I use the polite, I usually use one because I think this very
polite than other.
AS: Than the others.
Nam: Yeah, than the others.
AS: So um why do you think that the first one is the most polite?
Nam: I think the writer must use the correctly and politely in the first.
AS: In the first. Okay.
Nam: For the first and then it’s a then it’s…
AS: Less polite.
Nam: Ah, less polite and the last, I think the last you can use with
friends and person who close to me.

(Nam: Interview 2, 7/4/13)

In the excerpt above, Nam is demonstrating her active engagement with making
meaning of the Conversation Strategies given the dearth of pragmatic information in
the coursebook and by the teachers. However, analysis of the coursebook data found
that the coursebook’s representation of phrases was not organised around politeness
and did not correspond with Nam’s logic. Furthermore, students did not always
accurately interpret the appropriacy of particular phrases in the Conversation
Strategies. For example, Wan said that she would use “would you guys like to
come?” when offering an invitation to a teacher.

AS: In each situation, which one, which choices would you use,
probably? Like in this one you’ve would you guys like to
come, do you want to come?, would you care to join us? Are
you free?
Wan: Um with the friends, I would say that is short. Are you free?
Wan: It’s easy to speak and it looks like we friendly.
AS: Ah, okay. Nice. And if you were talking with someone like a
teacher, what would you say?
Wan: Hmm. Would you guys like to come?
The above excerpt suggests that Wan is not aware of the appropriate use of ‘guys’ in terms of grammar and possibly register. She may be relying on her knowledge of modality to make what she thinks are appropriate linguistic choices. It demonstrates how the absence of pragmatic information in the coursebook and in the classroom regarding this exponent could lead to students making inappropriate linguistic choices. The excerpt above also demonstrates how a lack of clarity around the meaning of particular words may be problematic in terms of students’ linguistic choices. Without knowledge of the meaning and use of ‘guys’ in the phrase “Would you guys...”, students may rely on their knowledge of the use of ‘would’ as a politeness marker and may not be aware of the change in register signalled by ‘guys’.

In ELT coursebooks, politeness is often reduced to formal and informal phrases or expressions realised in various forms of modality. In the coursebook data, it was found that the one reference to politeness in Hemispheres 2 was in a workbook activity asking students to categorise the given phrases into those that were formal and those that were informal. The risk here is that students will take up this delineation without regard for the complexity of language use and the social relationships, social distance, and the context that influences linguistic choices. Many students in the study said that they would like to be given pragmatic information by teachers in their lessons. However, this requires that teachers have the pedagogical content knowledge of pragmatics and politeness to be able to do this effectively. The findings from the teacher data suggest that this is an area that needs further development in terms of teacher education.

Indeed, students did not always rely on the coursebook or the teachers to inform their linguistic choices. For example, Matt told his students not to use ‘preference’ as it sounded dry without explaining or discussing the contexts in which it might be appropriate. Yet Wan and Mod mentioned that they might use ‘preference’ in more formal situations and Fai said she would use it because she had learned it before. Moreover, some of the students said they would use different phrases than those presented in the coursebook to perform a particular function. For example, several students said that they would say “I think...” to express their opinion for the Conversation Strategy Discussing Opinions, an option that the coursebook chose not to present. Furthermore, some of the students’ interpretations
of the Conversation Strategies were found to differ from the functions being taught in the Conversation Strategy. For example, Wan interpreted the coursebook’s conversation model for the Conversation Strategy *Asking about and Expressing Preferences* as an offer to change seats rather than a simple discussion about seat preferences.

AS: … How do you talk about preferences in Thai? The same as this or...?

Wan: Yeah. It’s the same. When you sit on the plane and the outside, the kids love to sit on the window.

AS: On the window seat yeah?

Wan: And ask them would you prefer to sit here? Or something like that.

(Wan: Interview 1, 16/12/12)

For Wan, the purpose behind the discussing seat preferences appears to have been what was most salient about the conversation and as such she interpreted the conversation as an offer. This demonstrates Wan’s concern with why this conversation might unfold in the world outside the classroom, that is the dynamics of English language in use. However, while some of the phrases presented in this Conversation Strategy could be used to achieve an offer to change seats, others are not. The potential ambiguity of this conversation is a factor the coursebook had apparently not considered in presenting it. Furthermore, as this was not used by teachers in the study to teach the Conversation Strategy, the purpose of the conversation and the potential alternate uses of some of the phrases were not clarified in the classroom.

*The importance of semantic knowledge*

Consistent in the students’ accounts of their use of English was a concern with their limited knowledge of vocabulary. Indeed, students’ semantic knowledge appeared to be a significant factor in their linguistic choice-making with respect to the Conversation Strategies. Students said that they would not try to remember or use phrases where the meaning was not clear. While students reported sometimes asking teachers for clarification of the meaning of particular words, the classroom observation data found that no instances of students asking for clarification of word...
meaning. Regarding phrases from the Conversation Strategy *Asking about and Expressing Preferences*, Fai made the following comments:

**AS:** And how about this here, how would you respond?

**Fai:** “I prefer” and “my preference is...”

**AS:** So why would you use “my preference is...”? I’m just curious.

**Fai:** It’s easy.

**AS:** It’s easy. Easy to say.

**Fai:** Yes.

**AS:** Cool. Cool. Okay, so this here, “I’d rather have” not so easy?

**Fai:** I don’t know the meaning of rather.

(Fai: Interview 1, 15/12/12)

This excerpt illustrates that while Fai understands the meaning of some of the exponents in a set, she does not draw on the implied shared meaning among exponents in a set to attempt to understand the meaning of the unknown phrase. Here Fai appears to be trying to decode the phrase without reference to the logic of equivalence the coursebook set up between the phrase and other phrases in the set. The absence of explicit definitions and explanations of possible uses of phrases in the coursebook and by the teacher mean that students may not learn or understand particular phrases that they may encounter in interactions outside the classroom. In the classes I observed, students rarely asked for clarification or definitions of words or phrases they did not understand.

In discussing linguistic preferences from the Conversation Strategies, few students stated that they would try to remember or learn phrases that are more idiomatic or figurative in their meaning. Fon was one of the few students who showed interest in learning idioms. She discusses how she finds out their meaning below:

**AS:** … So when you’re trying to learn this, how do you figure out the meaning?

**Fon:** Hmm. Sometimes from the teacher and sometimes from the dictionary.

**AS:** Yeah? You look it up?

**Fon:** Yes. I think it’s not from a dictionary, it’s from google idioms.

**AS:** Ah, nice. Okay, so do you do that fairly often or?
Fon: Yes, I think some words or some idiom dictionaries doesn’t have and if you look in the google it have. It have both the meaning and example.  

(Fon: Interview 1, 16/2/13)

The excerpt above demonstrates Fon’s agency in accessing definitions of phrases that were not provided by the coursebook or her teacher. While Fon proactively investigates the meaning of some of the idioms presented in the coursebook, few of the other students in the study indicated that learning figurative language was a priority. It appears that the majority of students are making their choices based on the context of being an English language learner in a country where English is not an official language and opportunities for exposure to more idiomatic expressions are not always readily available. Hence the coursebook and/or teacher need to clarify the meaning of idiomatic expressions. This is not to say that students will take up the use of the idiomatic expressions presented in the coursebook. It could be that students’ apparent lack of interest in learning figurative language is due to their own intended uses of English outside the classroom that necessitate the use of language which is more transparent in meaning.

Prioritising mutual understanding

Indeed, mutual understanding appears to be a core consideration for the students in the study. Students mentioned that they are less likely to use language that is not immediately clear in order to be clearly understood in interactions. Students are taking into consideration their conversational partners and choosing to learn and use phrases which they know their conversational partners will be able to understand. For example, regarding the use of ‘prefer’ and ‘preference’ in discussing preferences, Wan made the following comments:

Wan: More... you can use more understand and you can use and you can have more understand.
AS: Okay. If you use prefer?
Wan: Yeah.
AS: Okay. So more people will understand prefer?
Wan: understand prefer. Yeah.
AS: than preference?
Wan: yeah.
AS: Okay. That’s interesting. Good good. Um so “you would rather” you would use the options or the choices that most
In the excerpt above, Wan is demonstrating that mutual understanding is a core concern for her in choosing which phrases to use in discussing preferences. Chapter Two outlined three dimensions of understanding – intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability (Nelson, 2008). The above excerpt relates predominantly to comprehensibility in that it refers to the ability to determine meaning from a word or utterance spoken by another. The consideration of mutual understanding demonstrated here is a key feature of ELF interactions suggesting that Wan is cognisant that her conversational partners may not always be ‘native speakers’ of English.

With respect to intelligibility and understanding, the ability to recognise another’s word or utterance, pronunciation is a further key consideration. Jenkins (2000) found that in ELF interactions, speakers often diverged from ‘standard’ English pronunciation in order to be intelligible to their conversational partner. While *Hemispheres 2* exclusively used standard American English accents to model the Conversation Strategies, the students in the study are engaged in interactions with people from a variety of backgrounds and as such may need to adapt their pronunciation accordingly. Contrary to Michael’s assumption that his own Canadian accent would provide a useful pronunciation model for his students, students are navigating issues of intelligibility with people from various native and non-native English speaking backgrounds. For example, Chompoo discusses intelligibility with respect to her Japanese boss in the excerpt below:

> AS: So do you sometimes have difficulty understanding his Japanese accent?
> Chompoo: Uh huh. Yes.
> AS: For English?
> Chompoo: Yes, because if he say tire, it’s the wheel of the car. His pronunciation is tie, tie. It’s difficult for me to understand.

(Chompoo: Interview 1, 16/12/12)

Similarly, May discusses the difficulty of understanding the Indian accent of her sister’s English.

> AS: So then what accent do you prefer to listen to?
May: I like English or American.
AS: Yeah?
May: Yes I can understand English, American or Australia. Yes.
AS: Okay.
May: But if India...
AS: Uh huh.
May: Because my sister study in India yes and when they come back to Thailand they speak and I don’t understand.
AS: Oh really?
May: Yes.

(May: Interview, 18/5/13)

In the above excerpts from the student interviews, May and Chompoo are referring to their own contexts of English language use and the very real issue of intelligibility in terms of negotiating mutual understanding in their interactions. It raises the question of the relevance of relying exclusively on ‘native speaker’ accents to model and teach English language in use. Verschueren (1999) argues that language users draw on all aspects of their communicative contexts in making linguistic choices including their conversational partners. For this reason, from a pragmatic perspective, students need to be given the opportunity to hear and make sense of a variety of accents in order to be able to interact successfully in English with conversational partners from varied backgrounds.

The importance of choice

The final recurrent theme with respect to students’ linguistic choice-making is the importance of choice. The coursebook analysis found that the Conversation Strategies offered students a multitude of choices to express particular functions. Teachers in their interviews were critical of the number of choices commenting that there were too many options. However, the student data revealed significant diversity in the students’ linguistic choice-making in relation to the phrases and expressions in the Conversation Strategy section pointing to the need for choice. The phrases and expressions they chose to remember or use were not always the same as other students. Furthermore, students appear to recognise that the phrases they choose or find easy to remember may be different from other students and therefore having multiple exponents to choose from is useful. Mod made the following comments in her interview:
AS: It’s good to have more choices than just one or two?
Mod: I think more choice is good.
AS: Yeah? Why? Why do you think that?
Mod: Can everyone is different thing and everyone want to use I think.
AS: Yeah. Okay. So it’s better for different people might want to use different language?
Mod: Yes.
AS: Or you might hear it.
Mod: Yes because I learn about this and everyone different use.

(Mod: Interview, 15/12/12)

Fai made similar comments in her interview:

AS: Okay so I’m not sure if I asked you this before but because there’s lots of language, lots of choices, do you think it would be better to have fewer choices or um have all of these options and you can just choose one? What’s better?
Fai: All of these and I choose one.
AS: You choose one. Why do you think that is better?
Fai: Because I think somebody think other word is easy more than the word I choose.
AS: you choose?
Fai: Yes.
AS: Nice. So different phrases for different people yeah?
Fai: Yes.

(Fai: Interview 2, 9/2/13)

Both Fai and Mod are demonstrating knowledge of the variability inherent in language use. Their perspectives contrast with those of the teachers whose knowledge of English language use appeared to be constrained by their own intuitions about their uses of English in their countries of origin. However, while students may understand that language choices are variable depending on the language user, the student data has demonstrated that they are not always aware of the ways in which various exponents presented in the Conversation Strategies can be used in interactions to achieve different effects. This underscores the importance of the coursebook and/or teacher making students aware of the impact of contextual features on language use with implications for teacher education in pragmatics.
8.2.4 Summary

Despite the linguistic focus of the coursebook and the classroom teaching, the Conversation Strategies appear to have been a channel for the students in this study to move into pragmatics. The students in the study appear to be oriented toward putting the Conversation Strategies to use. Contrary to some of the deficit representations of students in the teacher data, the student data is showing that students are actively drawing on their pragmatic and linguistic knowledge to make their language choices. The multiplicity of choices offered by the coursebook provides students with the opportunity to learn and use different language. In making choices from the exponents presented in the Conversation Strategies, students seem to be influenced by their prior exposure to English, their anticipated conversational partners, their contexts of English language use, their vocabulary knowledge, their English language proficiency, and their pragmatic awareness.

What we see in the student data, in terms of pragmatics and Fairclough’s (2003) recontextualising principles, is the presence of context and contextualisation. Students are using English in diverse social settings in a variety of situations. Students are actively applying the Conversation Strategies to their everyday life and recognise the importance of the linguistic context in making and responding to utterances in interaction. Their use of language from the Conversation Strategies is selective, as noted above, signalling an awareness of the dynamics of language use. This is further exemplified in the predominant absence of idiomatic language in students’ language choices and students’ concern with being understood by their conversational partners. Students’ contextualisation of the Conversation Strategies demonstrates a low degree of abstraction in that students are making the Conversation Strategies more concrete through connecting them to their own contexts of use. The student interview data revealed students’ positive evaluations of the Conversation Strategies as well as explanations of the applicability of the Conversation Strategies to their everyday lives.

8.3 DISCUSSION

The analysis of the student data as outlined in the previous sections sought to identify students’ responses to and understandings of the Conversation Strategy section of Hemispheres 2 in order to understand how this was of relevance to the
learning of pragmatics by English language learners in the EFL context of Thailand. I investigated the students’ responses to the coursebook, specifically the Conversation Strategies, to make claims about students’ understandings and uptake of pragmatics. The student data revealed substantial diversity in terms of students’ reported contexts of English language use; their responses to the Conversation Strategies; their classroom practices; their preference for particular Conversation Strategies and associated phrases and expressions; and their understandings of pragmatics. This finding contrasts with the views of the teachers in the study who tended to refer to students collectively without acknowledging the diverse motivations and profiles of students. In terms of addressing the broader research problem of the teaching of English in foreign language contexts through global ELT coursebooks by native speaker teachers where learners of English are predominantly using English as a lingua franca, the findings from the student data are significant in that they reveal both affordances and constraints for students of English as a foreign language. These will be discussed in the following subsections.

**EFL students as competent English language users**

The analysis in this chapter has demonstrated clearly that the students in this study are competent English language users who are navigating in English across a multitude of social functions including workplace conversations with Japanese colleagues, online chat with Thai friends, talking with German relatives, and transactions in regional and international travel contexts. In this way, the students are actively taking ownership of English. Learners of English as a foreign language such as the students in this study need to be recognised and acknowledged as English language users rather than deficient learners of English. The repositioning of English language learners as English language users is not a new point. Indeed, the need to recognise and acknowledge EFL students as proficient users of English has been argued extensively elsewhere (Firth & Wagner, 1997). The point I make here is that, in relation to teaching and learning English language in use, without any acknowledgement by teachers and coursebooks of students’ actual language use there will always be a significant gap in the teaching of English, specifically English language pragmatics. Yet what this study has shown is that there appears to be a general complicity around the discounting and silencing of the competent and
confident English language use by non-native speakers of English in EFL contexts, a point I discuss further in the following section.

**Discounting and silencing the non-native speaker of English**

What is apparent in light of the student data is a broad complicity between the coursebook, the teachers, and even the students themselves in relation to the discounting and silencing of the non-native English speaker. As highlighted in Chapters 1 and 2, English is being spoken worldwide and most of the English interactions are happening between so-called non-native speakers of English (Crystal, 2008; Jenkins et al, 2011). Yet we see no representation in the coursebook of proficient non-native speakers modelling English language use. There is no representation at all of Thai speakers of English or their predominant contexts of English language use, for example, despite being trialled in Thailand. Implicit in the absence of non-native speakers in coursebooks is the idea that the only people who speak English in the world are native speakers. This is further exemplified by the teachers in this study who, based on the interview data, appear to take the position that English is the preserve of the native speaker. The underpinning assumption is that English is indeed ‘foreign’ to Thai students and not part of their everyday practice as though students are not absorbing or utilising English for their own purposes. However, as the analysis in this chapter demonstrates, students are actively using English in a variety of ways in diverse contexts. Of particular concern though is the students’ complicity in their own silencing in that they do not appear to recognise or value their own English language use.

**Students’ strategic use of a global ELT coursebook**

It was found in the coursebook analysis that the coursebook has a linguistic focus and the Conversation Strategies have been simplified to emphasise particular phrases and expressions. The contexts within which the Conversation Strategies are presented are generic representing English language use as standard American English between American language users. However, students in this study reported using English in diverse and specific contexts and predominantly with non-native speakers of English.

Despite the apparent power of the coursebook as a genre of governance, as reflected in the teachers’ classroom practice foregrounding the linguistic, the students in this study continued to make meaning of the language presented contextualising it
for their own purposes. While the coursebook appears to constrain students’
linguistic choices, students actively select and take up particular phrases for their
own use. In this way, the students are demonstrating agency which contrasts
markedly with the teachers’ deficit perceptions of what their students are capable of
doing and understanding. While the teachers in the study appeared to struggle to
make meaning of the Conversation Strategies for students beyond the presentation
and practice of functional exponents, students make their own meaning of the
Conversation Strategies, adapting and applying them to their everyday life. Students
use the coursebook as a resource for practising English language use in the classroom
and in some ways they are constrained by the linguistic choices made available to
them there. However, the student data revealed that students do not always take up
the coursebook as is. Instead, they interpret and apply the Conversation Strategies
according to their own contexts of English language use.

**Constraints imposed by teaching practices**

The previous data chapters demonstrated that the coursebook and the teachers
utilised a Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) methodology to teach the
Conversation Strategies, a methodology common in the teaching of vocabulary and
grammar but not considered useful for teaching pragmatic spoken interaction.
Indeed, the predominant use of PPP methodology was found to provide students with
limited opportunities to explore the pragmatic features of English. Students in their
interviews commented that while they valued practice in their Conversation Strategy
lessons, they also wanted teachers to provide key definitions as well as explanations
of how to use particular phrases and expressions. The students in the study did not
ask for this kind of information in the classes I observed. The power relationships in
the classroom established through the classroom discourse pattern of IRF and
teacher-centred modes of classroom talk in which teachers are positioned as expert
purveyors of English language knowledge meant that students had limited
opportunity (and power) to ask questions regarding English language use.

The student data revealed that activities which prescribed students’ English
language use provided limited opportunities for students to extend their knowledge
of English as these activities did not allow for the negotiation of meaning, a process
central to learning an additional language. It was found that without opportunities to
negotiate the meaning and use of particular phrases students did not take up new
phrases but relied on their prior knowledge of English to inform their language choices from the Conversation Strategies. Accordingly, the absence of metapragmatic explanations was found to constrain students’ language choices in production activities.

Furthermore, utilising the classroom as the context for classroom activities was found to restrict students’ opportunities to make connections with their own contexts of English language use that may have made the Conversation Strategies and associated expressions more salient to students. The use of topics was one way students sought to make connections with their own contexts of use through suggesting topics relevant to their everyday lives, adapting the topics provided by the coursebook and teachers, and avoiding topics that were taboo or controversial. Despite the constraints imposed by the teaching practices, analysis of the student data showed that students are not taking in all the content of the coursebook and associated teaching, but instead are strategically mediating the input from the coursebook and the teachers. I discuss this further in the next section.

**Students’ strategic mediation of the coursebook and teaching**

The analysis of the student data demonstrated students’ strategic decision-making about why and what they would take on board. What we see in this analysis is that despite the input from the coursebook and the teachers in the classroom, students are making agentive decisions about which strategies and exponents they would engage with and which ones they would not. Students’ intake was not the same as the input provided by the coursebook and teachers. Students were strategically mediating the input. The factors that were evident in students’ strategic decision-making with respect to the Conversation Strategies include: students’ prior exposure to phrases from the Conversation Strategies; the phrases’ similarity to Thai; mutual intelligibility in interaction; clarity of meaning of particular phrases; and perceived politeness. Students’ decision making with respect to the Conversation Strategies was diverse, dynamic and contextual.

Within the coursebook and classroom teaching of the Conversation Strategies, the emphasis appears to be on students’ acquisition of a number of functional exponents. However, Chapters Six and Seven revealed that there is little if any instruction as to how to put the exponents to use in context. Nonetheless, students attempted to make their own logic of the phrases and expressions presented in the
Conversation Strategies with a focus on taking up those phrases that would allow them to be understood in conversation. For this reason, phrases which were more figurative in their expression were avoided by students focusing instead on phrases that were the most transparent in meaning. While some students’ appeared to adopt the coursebooks’ notion of politeness, in terms of delineating phrases and expressions as more or less formal as signalled by modality, several students demonstrated a more nuanced perspective of politeness considering the context, social relationships, and social distance. It raises the question of whether other students would take up more nuanced perspectives of politeness if given the tools and resources to do so.

**The input/intake relationship: implications for teaching pragmatics**

The previous section highlighted a divide between the input provided by the coursebook and teachers and the subsequent intake of the students. Given that students in this study for the most part chose not take up new language provided by the coursebook and teachers, what the coursebook and teachers presented in terms of English language use is highly salient. The predominant linguistic focus of the coursebook and teachers in the teaching of Conversation Strategies meant that students were not provided with any information that might otherwise inform their choice-making and better prepare them for the diverse range of current and intended contexts in which they are using or plan to use English. The implication for teaching then is that pragmatics needs to be taught explicitly in line with students’ diverse uses of English. It could be that students would take up and use new phrases or expressions if they were provided with input to make meaning of them. Equally, students may strategically choose not to take up particular phrases for the reasons mentioned previously, reasons that are informed by and simultaneously inform their diverse contexts of English language use.

The assumption of the coursebook and teachers is that the contexts of EFL students’ English language use are not relevant or important in deciding what to teach or present. The previous chapter highlighted that the teachers’ linguistic choice-making with respect to the Conversation Strategies does not take into consideration students’ contexts of English language use. Yet, our linguistic choices are always made in context (Verschueren, 1999) meaning that the contexts of EFL students are highly relevant in terms of students’ linguistic choice-making and in
terms of the input they are provided with by teachers and coursebooks to make those choices.

8.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored pragmatics as it represented by fifteen students in a Thai English as a foreign language classroom context. It examined the students’ contexts of English language use, and their perspectives and selective uses of the Conversation Strategies. The analysis found that the students are strategic and competent English language users engaged in diverse and pervasive English language use. As Verschueren notes (1999, 2009), language use is about the making of linguistic choices and this process is one that happens dynamically with language users making structural choices at various degrees of awareness and according to the contextual variables operating. Furthermore, contextual variables may also be shaped by the structural choices that are made as language users interact. The students in this study drew dynamically on their contexts to make meaning of the language they were learning and to make strategic choices about to learn and what to ignore. Accordingly, contrary to the findings from the coursebook and teacher analysis, students’ representations of the dynamics of English language in use are rich and diverse.
Chapter 9: Reconceptualising pragmatics in EFL contexts: Implications for coursebook design, teaching and learning

This thesis has reported on an instrumental case study of the teaching of pragmatics as part of English Language teaching and learning in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. The objective of the study was to investigate how speaking in a foreign language is being presented in commercially-produced, globally-utilised coursebooks and taught often by English language native speaker teachers in contexts where the teachers are not locals. The questions that arise within this pervasive situation relate to speaking as not just a skill but as oral language in use with cultural and social rules of engagement, in other words, pragmatics. How should English spoken language in interactional use be taught? How does spoken English operate in an EFL context where other cultural and social rules operate? How do ‘native speaker’ English language teachers from myriad non-local backgrounds teach oral language in use? What decisions do they make in their teaching about what constitutes appropriate English language use? How are these features of spoken English presented and represented in coursebooks designed for a global market that operates across diverse cultural spaces and language uses?

These are the questions that arose in response to the existing literature on English Language Teaching and pragmatics. The aim of the study was to address the broader conundrums evident in the ELT literature regarding the teaching of pragmatics, namely: the global use of English as a lingua franca; the prevalent use of globally distributed ELT coursebooks published in the US or UK; the apparent preference for native speaker teachers; and the complex inter-relatedness of language and culture. To this end the study was designed to address the specific questions of:

- How pragmatics is represented in the existing research literature;
- What discourse(s) are discernible in the coursebook’s representations of English language use;
- How teachers respond to the coursebook’s representations of English language use and how they recontextualise pragmatics in their classroom practice;

- How students understand English language use and how they respond to the coursebooks’ representations of English language use and the teachers’ classroom practices.

The case study was designed to gain detailed insights into the operation of one EFL site that exemplifies many of the ELT conditions experienced by English language students and teachers around the world. The site was an English language school in Bangkok that was managed and staffed by overseas teachers, most of whom were English language native speakers. The college – known in the study as BELS – offered a range of courses including General English, English for Academic Purposes, Business English, IELTS and TOEFL Exam Preparation, and General Writing. The course researched in the study was a General English course. The study focussed on representations of English language in use in the coursebook, *Hemispheres* 2, and by teachers in their classroom practice, and how students perceived and interpreted these representations for their own use in and beyond the classroom. Given the global reality of increasing English language use for international, regional and local communication particularly in contexts where English is not an official language, the study was interested in the constraints in and affordances of teaching English language use in EFL contexts like Thailand where English is not an official language but nonetheless used widely. The findings from this study provide fresh insights into how pragmatics is taught and learned in EFL classrooms. It is clear from the research that students are learning General English in order to be able to use it a variety of contexts.

This chapter brings together the findings of the data chapters, discusses their implications, and presents recommendations for future research and practice. My study took a critical discourse analytic approach, which in line with Verschueren’s theory of pragmatics and its application in Fairclough’s model of CDA meant an engagement with language users, their contexts of language use, and the choices they make with an emphasis on social practice and power for the purpose of making visible hidden ideologies which both constrain and facilitate the teaching and learning of pragmatics. The chapter begins with a summary and synthesis of the
study’s findings. It then presents the key issues in teaching and learning pragmatics in EFL contexts followed by a discussion of the theoretical and methodological contributions of the study. Next, I outline recommendations for ELT coursebook design, ELT pedagogy, and ELT Teacher Training and Professional Development. Finally, I recommend future directions for research.

9.1 SUMMARY AND SYNTHESIS OF THE STUDY’S FINDINGS

This thesis brings together insights that show how the coursebook and teachers’ implementation of the book relate to their students’ uptake of English language speaking conventions. The students are positioned as the beneficiaries of the book and the teaching, but are already conversing in English via multiple modes such as face-to-face, online chat programs, telephone, and Skype. Given this reality, the study draws out key findings from the research about pragmatics and coursebook design, teacher knowledge of and respect for local cultural practices, and recognition of the extent of student English language use beyond the classroom. In the light of these findings, the thesis goes on to make recommendations for coursebook design, ELT pedagogy and teacher education.

This study had its genesis in the seemingly conflicting realities of EFL contexts where English is predominantly used as a lingua franca, yet the use of global ELT coursebooks predominate along with a preference for native speaker teachers. Chapter Two illustrated the ELT industry’s continued enchantment with global ELT coursebooks and apparent concern with communicative language teaching including an increasing research interest in the teaching of English language in use, that is, pragmatics. This study has illustrated how these contradictory realities play out in EFL classrooms. As the analysis shows, the power of the coursebook as a genre of governance in its role as a de facto curriculum came to matter in a number of ways in terms of the teaching of pragmatics.

Firstly, despite the widespread use of ELF, particular Englishes are privileged over others, those being the standard varieties from inner circle countries. The study also highlighted a continued preference for NS English teachers coming from inner circle countries to teach in EFL contexts. These discourses continue to dominate EFL classrooms and are evident in the self-positioning of coursebooks and teachers as experts in English language use and their positioning of students as learners rather
than users of English. These discourses reflect the different practices, identities and values associated with the social practice of teaching English in EFL contexts that coalesce to assume a naturalness that is rarely challenged or problematized, not by the school, nor the teachers and students. This, however, is the role of this research project. With its additional focus on students’ perspectives, this study was able to demonstrate students’ subject positions as English language users (Cook, 2002) and how the coursebook and teaching did little to acknowledge these.

The review of the literature regarding the teaching of pragmatics revealed a fragmenting of pragmatics into pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics with a tendency to focus on pragmalinguistics at the expense of sociopragmatics. In contrast, I drew on Verschueren’s (1999, 2009) theory of pragmatics which foregrounded the central role of context and all its associated social variables in language use. In line with the dominant literature, the coursebook and classroom practices were found to be actively shaped by decontextualized language functions, that is, pragmalinguistics. This was evidenced in the coursebook’s functional exponent approach to teaching Conversation Strategies that was then taken up by the teachers. In contrast, the students were shown to be actively engaged in making sense of the Conversation Strategies drawing on their varied contexts, that is, sociopragmatics, underscoring the importance of context in both using and learning to use English.

My interpretive framework has put together Fairclough’s (2001, 2003) CDA and Verschueren’s (1999) theory of pragmatics to explore the social practice of teaching English in EFL contexts. I put these approaches together because pragmatics, in its concern with language in use, is a crucial part of the ELT debate in EFL contexts. The questions and conundrums around teaching English language use in EFL contexts need to be addressed given the political economy of the ELT industry and the prevalent use of commercially-produced and globally-distributed coursebooks. The interpretive lens I have used in this study has drawn together Verschueren’s (1999) concepts of structure, context, dynamics and salience and Fairclough’s (2003) concept of language as social practice in which pragmatics can be seen to be represented in and recontextualised across genres in particular ways. I used Verschueren’s theory of pragmatics in dialogue with Fairclough’s CDA to undertake close textual analysis of the coursebook, classroom practice, and
interviews with teachers and students, both to analyse selected micro elements and to capture the macro context. The analytic framework enabled nested interrogations of the coursebook, its enactment by teachers in EFL classrooms, and its uptake by students, in terms of how the pragmatic features of English were represented and understood through the teaching of the coursebook’s Conversation Strategies.

Table 9.1 presents the limited representation of pragmatics in *Hemispheres 2* and in the teachers’ classroom practices, and how those representations are taken up, resisted and transformed by the students in their recontextualisation of pragmatics. My study presents detailed findings about the Conversation Strategy section of *Hemispheres 2*, how it was perceived and taught by five native speaker English teachers in an EFL school in Thailand, and how the coursebook and teaching was viewed and taken up by fifteen of their students for use in and beyond the classroom. The findings from the analysis in the three data chapters are summarised and synthesised in Table 9.1 indicating the recontextualisation of pragmatics along the genre chain outlined in Chapter Five. The genre chain begins with how English language in use, pragmatics, is represented in *Hemispheres 2*, a global ELT coursebook; moving to how teachers describe and enact their uptake of these coursebook representations in their interview talk and classroom interactions; through to the end users, the students and their uptake and interpretations of pragmatics as represented in the coursebook and enacted by the teachers.

Table 9.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Hemispheres 2</em></th>
<th>The Teachers</th>
<th>The Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodological Structure</strong></td>
<td>adopts a presentation, practice, production pedagogical (PPP) approach to teach English language in use;</td>
<td>relied on the coursebook to shape how and what they teach; adopted the PPP approach of the coursebook;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 9: Reconceptualising pragmatics in EFL contexts: Implications for coursebook design, teaching and learning 239
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Hemispheres 2</strong></th>
<th><strong>The Teachers</strong></th>
<th><strong>The Students</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linguistic Structure</strong></td>
<td>emphasises linguistic structures in the form of conversational routines; for the most part adopted the coursebook’s linguistic emphasis on conversational routines omitting those they perceive to be inappropriate based on their own experience of the phrases in use;</td>
<td>for the most part chose to remember and use phrases and expressions they were already familiar with through prior exposure; resisted the logic of equivalence between the phrases as presented in the Conversation Strategy section of the coursebook and attempted to make their own meaning of individual phrases;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context</strong></td>
<td>represents language in use in generic and mostly decontextualised situations; did not always agree with the coursebook’s representations of language in use and sometimes chose not to teach Conversation Strategies or associated phrases; mostly preserved the logic of equivalence between the phrases as presented in the Conversation Strategy section of the coursebook and seldom taught social variables impacting on the interpretation and use of particular phrases;</td>
<td>were engaged in diverse and pervasive English language use; were predominantly using English as a lingua franca with a regional focus; were not always aware of the diverse and pervasive ways they use English;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>limits contextual features of English language in use to a situation without any specification around variables such as place, ethnicity, nationality, and gender; often represents English language use as Anglo-American language use as reflected in the exclusive use of Western names and Standard American English spelling;</td>
<td>did not always agree with or understand the coursebook’s representations of language in use and sometimes chose to use different phrases than those presented for a particular function; recontextualised the Conversation Strategies adapting them to their own contexts of language use;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>draws exclusively on the language in the Conversation Strategies presented in the coursebook to teach and represent English language use;</td>
<td>were cognisant of the impact of social roles and relationships on language use, but were not always clear about the use of particular phrases;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discourse Topics</strong></td>
<td>tends to use discourse topics which are representative of young, middle class lifestyles; mostly localised topics for the Thai context; sometimes used controversial or taboo topics;</td>
<td>suggested topics that were connected to their everyday lives; adapted topics provided by the coursebook and the teachers; mostly avoided taboo topics;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 9: Reconceptualising pragmatics in EFL contexts: Implications for coursebook design, teaching and learning 240
Dynamics

represents the dynamics of English language in use poorly;
represents the dynamics of English language in use poorly;
represented the dynamics of English language in use rich and diverse ways;

Salience

prioritises the teaching of discrete language functions and exponents.
prioritised the teaching of discrete language functions and exponents.
prioritised language functions and exponents that were connected to their local Thai context drawing predominantly on their prior knowledge of English and Thai norms of language use.

9.2 KEY ISSUES IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF PRAGMATICS IN EFL CONTEXTS

In this section, I explore the key insights and contributions related to this research project. The contradictory realities of EFL contexts – where English is predominantly used as a lingua franca, yet the use of global ELT coursebooks predominate along with a preference for native speaker teachers – were found to constrain the teaching and learning of pragmatics in the following ways:

- reductive representations of context by the coursebook and teachers;
- essentialist approaches to language and culture;
- reductive understandings of English language use by the coursebook and teachers;
- a hegemonic discourse of native speaker English; and
- the restrictive methodology employed by the coursebook and teachers to teach pragmatics.

At the same time, the findings demonstrate that the students in the study are actively engaged in recontextualising pragmatics for their own needs and purposes. In recontextualising pragmatics, the students spoke back to and in some cases were co-opted into the constraints outlined above.

The following subsections are organised according to key issues involved in the social practice of teaching and learning English language in use in an EFL context. Within each section, I discuss the issues with respect to the coursebook, the
teachers in the study, and the students in an attempt to represent the complexities and
nuances involved in the everyday practices of these key participants.

9.2.1 Representations of context

The theoretical framework informing the study allowed investigation into the
role of context in the teaching and learning of English language pragmatics. The
findings revealed that the coursebook and teachers represented this integral aspect of
English language use reductively despite the rich and diverse contexts in which
students were found to use English.

*Decontextualisation in global ELT coursebooks*

Pragmatic analysis of the coursebook revealed contradictory elements of its
design that aimed on the one hand to provide students with Conversation Strategies
for use in interaction, and on the other hand, decontextualised the Conversation
Strategies by removing the particularities of context associated with language use.
The coursebook analysis showed that, rather than engaging with and representing its
readers’ diverse contexts of English language use, *Hemispheres 2* represents English
language use as a series of generic functions that are decontextualized. From a
pragmatic perspective, the coursebook is foregrounding structure and providing
little in the way of context, an element Verschueren (1999) argues is fundamental to
language use. The coursebooks’ limited representation of context can be seen as its
commercial imperative as a global publication to reach as wide an audience as
possible. The political economy of English language teaching in which English is
positioned as a commodity is such that coursebooks’ commercial imperatives can go
unquestioned. I argue that students, as end-users of global ELT coursebooks who
seek to use English in the global ‘marketplace’, are key stakeholders in their
production and design, and therefore students’ needs, purposes and contexts for using
English should be integral to the coursebook and its representations.

* Teachers’ reductive representations of context

The coursebook’s reductive representation of context was taken up by the
teachers and, for the most part, reproduced in their classroom practices despite the
teachers’ differing views of what constituted appropriate English language use. In the
teaching of the Conversation Strategies, rather than augmenting the coursebook’s
reductive representation of context and addressing the contradictions, teachers
reduced the contextual features further. The activities in the classroom primarily drew on the classroom as common ground with very little overlap into the worlds of the students and teachers outside the classroom. This provided students with limited opportunities to explore the influences of contextual variables in English language use given that the social roles and relationships between students in the classroom are more or less of equal status. By drawing on the common context of the classroom to teach spoken interaction, the interactions were stripped of the social roles, relationships, and settings that would otherwise constrain linguistic choices outside the classroom.

Furthermore, the teachers, as English language users, appeared to be drawing exclusively on their memory of English language use in prior native English-speaking contexts, in other words, how they have been socialised to use English. Their awareness of what is appropriate English language use was informed by Anglo-cultural norms which are not necessarily relevant to their Thai students’ contexts of English language use. The teachers’ linguistic choices and preferences demonstrate the valuing of their own prior contexts of English language use over Thai contexts of English language use. What was noticeably lacking in the data was any invitation by the teachers to ask the students to specify salient contexts of use from their own lives/experiences. They did not ask their students about their English language use and, by not doing this, discounted their students’ contexts of English language use and associated language preferences. Furthermore, the teachers, removed from their past home contexts of English language use, did not appear to be meaningfully engaged in their current context of English language use in Thailand. The teachers’ limited understanding of the Thai language was an additional barrier to their understanding of and engagement with the Thai context. While language use is acknowledged as a gateway to discussions and explorations of culture (see Liddicoat, 2014), as language teachers, the teachers in this study did not make this connection. The teachers, however, demonstrated no awareness of this problem and are therefore constrained in their ability to address it. These findings suggest a need to revisit the content of global TESOL courses and their capacity to adequately prepare teachers for English language teaching in diverse contexts.

Of note is that several teachers reported disagreeing with the coursebook’s representations of English language use. Interestingly, however, teachers for the most
part taught the Conversation Strategies as is, reinforcing the coursebook’s status as a genre of governance. Teachers are accepting the coursebook as the defacto curriculum and not looking elsewhere to augment the ‘curriculum’ with materials that deal more explicitly with context or reflect the local Thai context. The implication is that they do not see any lack. So what is happening here? The teachers are colluding with the coursebook in that what they are offering is decontextualized grammar. The coursebook remains front and centre of the teaching; in a teaching institution where teachers are transitory and the courses are segmented, the coursebook provides continuity and standardisation. The need for continuity and standardisation has become ‘common sense’ in EFL contexts around the world and as such has gone unquestioned. The coursebook manufacturers are catering to a market need – that of teacher mobility – and are providing a course where the teachers need only be slotted in. In this way, the coursebook and its associated representations of English and English language interactions, are powerful and dominate the teaching input and approach.

**Students’ rich and diverse contexts of English language use**

In contrast to the coursebook and teachers’ representations of context in relation to English language use, the student data revealed that the students’ use of English in the Thai context is diverse and commonplace. While students do use English with native speakers, they reported using English predominantly as a lingua franca. In other words, students are using English with other non-native speakers of English in contexts where Anglo-cultural norms do not apply. Examples of this include Bomb’s English language interactions with his visiting German relative and Nam’s English language interactions with hotel staff in Hong Kong. The students also reported using English in a variety of social settings incorporating a variety of social relationships with people from varied backgrounds, including their own Thai friends and family. The students’ accounts of the Conversation Strategies demonstrated that context was highly relevant both in their interpretation of the Conversation Strategies and their application of the language presented in the Conversation Strategies to their lives outside the classroom. EFL students, as language users, have a key stake in their English language education and are being affected by the design of global ELT coursebooks and teaching practices. While students reported finding the generic functions in the coursebook relatable to their
everyday life, the limited contextual information in the coursebook meant that the
students were provided with little information with which to apply the Conversation
Strategies appropriately in their own contexts of English language use. Verschueren
(2009) makes the point that structure can never truly be separated from context, for it
is often only in context that the meanings of particular structures become apparent.
The contexts of those who use English must be foregrounded in order for English to
be of practical use. Therefore, in teaching English language in use in EFL contexts,
global ELT coursebooks and teachers need to acknowledge and represent the rich
and diverse contexts of EFL students.

9.2.2 Approaches to language and culture - from detachment to dexterity

Language users draw on their cultural contexts to negotiate meaning in
interactions. In this way, culture is dynamically interconnected with language.
However, this study found that the coursebook presented language as though it were
detached from culture. Furthermore, the teachers were found to essentialise culture
and did not discuss culture in teaching the Conversation Strategies. In contrast, the
students demonstrated significant cultural dexterity in making meaning of the
coursebook and classroom practices, selectively adopting and adapting the
Conversation Strategies for use in their everyday language practices.

Cultural detachment in a global ELT coursebook

The approach of Hemispheres 2 to language and culture is to attempt to detach
culture from language, generalising the use of English across cultures. It presents the
language without any overt connection to its cultural context as though it were
universally applicable. In some instances it instructs the teacher to provide students
with ‘language and culture notes’ – which provides usage information again as
though it were universally applicable. However, the coursebook also presents
English with an implicit reference to American native English-speaking culture in its
use of American English spelling, American English language users and accents, and
contextual variables commensurate with American middle-class lifestyle values.
Given its limited explicit references to culture, it appears that the coursebook is
attempting to present a ‘culture-light’ version of native speaker English in order to
appeal to as broad an audience as possible.
Teachers’ essentialist views of culture

The language teachers in this study evidenced no awareness of the nexus between language and culture. They did not engage with culture in the classroom except reductively in terms of their pedagogical decision making. Many of the teachers’ representations of Thai culture were essentialist and not reflective of the students’ cultural positionings. The student data revealed that students’ English language use is diverse both in terms of contexts and linguistic choices, contradicting the teachers’ cultural assumptions. The teachers in this study did not seem to have any knowledge of new Thai culture where students’ English language use extends beyond interactions with native-speakres and includes lingua franca interactions and English-mediated technology use.

In Chapter Seven, I raised the point that the identities of most of the teachers in the study could be represented as migratory. The teachers showed limited investment in and knowledge of Thai culture. Furthermore, none of the teachers were proficient in or actively learning Thai and as a consequence are limited in what they can learn about Thai culture. As migratory native speaker English teachers, they appeared monolingual and mono-cultural, showing no evidence of cultural variegation. Their status as native English speakers afforded them significant power in that they are highly valued and sought after in EFL contexts. Consequently, the assumptions of the teachers regarding English language in use were not openly questioned by the students. Indeed, the students saw their teachers as models for English language use.

The teachers do not have to question their own cultural norms of language use because they are not being asked to. They take English and its use for granted. They see English language as grammar and separate from culture and the coursebook reinforces this perspective. This leaves the teachers with limited capacity to effectively mediate culture. Yet teachers act as a kind of cultural filter in which they decide what is and is not relevant for students, what works in terms of English language use and what does not, and what is and is not ‘English’. The unproblematised, uninterrogated English language use of the coursebook and the teachers is presented to students as a dominant hegemonic with no roots in the cultural nuances of context.

Pragmatics takes the perspective that language is a form of cultural practice. Because the teachers and the coursebook do not address culture in its full
complexity, their teaching of pragmatics can only be impoverished. This has implications for speaking which is incredibly culturally located. The teachers do not appear to know how to explore culture as part of English language use and do not prioritise it. Because they are not engaging with culture, the teachers are not seeing the Conversation Strategies as being influenced by culture. It is as though the Conversation Strategies are culturally sterile, devoid of culture. It raises the question of what English language teaching is. The coursebook and the teachers are viewing ELT as being about grammar and vocabulary with little if any consideration of pragmatics.

**Students’ cultural dexterity**

Meanwhile students are making links to their own language use in Thai and drawing on American movies and television series for information about appropriate English language use. They adapt the contexts of the coursebook and the classroom activities to more familiar and relevant situations. They are codeswitching, using ELF, and communicating with people in English via chat programs. The students are demonstrating significant cultural dexterity. The students, as emergent or, in some cases, proficient bilinguals, have the benefit of multiple cultural perspectives from which to approach and interpret English language use. In contrast, the coursebook and teachers’ views of English language use appear to be entirely mono-cultural.

**9.2.3 Understandings of English and English language use**

This study has revealed that the coursebook and teachers’ representations of English and English language use do not acknowledge or align with the students’ uses of English in the Thai context. English is positioned by the coursebook and the teachers as a ‘foreign’ language to the context in which it is being taught. The implication is that the learners of English in these contexts are not familiar with or using English already. However, this study has shown that the students are actively using English. Furthermore, they are still invested in and committed to learning English to benefit their use of it. There is a divide between English as the coursebook and teachers see it and what the students are predominantly using it for. The divide indicates a narrow understanding of English and English language use by the coursebook authors and the teachers. From a native speaker teacher perspective, Thailand is not seen as an English speaking context with proficient Thai English language users (Cook, 2002). Instead it is seen as a Thai speaking context with
deficient English language learners. Indeed, several of the teachers appeared to take a deficit view of their students.

**English as a lingua franca**

A key aspect of the students’ English language use that is ignored by the coursebook and the teachers is the students’ use of English as a lingua franca (ELF). As noted earlier, interactions in ELF are not driven by native speaker norms, but neither are they culturally neutral. Rather, culture is an emergent, negotiated resource in ELF interactions, moving between and across local, national, and global contexts (Baker, 2011a). Students therefore need to be able to negotiate complex and dynamic cultural references if they are to communicate successfully in ELF. The students in the study are predominantly operating in ELF. However, the coursebook and teachers do not acknowledge ELF in their representations of English language use and furthermore do not explicitly discuss culture. Instead it is clear that the coursebook and the teachers in the study are trying to make links with Anglo-cultural contexts in teaching English (in other words they are maintaining an English as a Foreign Language approach).

Viewed through the lens of a native English speaker with mono-cultural assumptions of English language use, ELF could simply be seen as a deficient interlanguage rather than a legitimate form of English language use. Indeed none of the teachers in the study demonstrated an awareness of the ELF use. While ELF may be used in the teachers’ native English-speaking contexts, the teachers showed no awareness of English being used for intercultural purposes with associated differences from standardised forms. Because ELF is not recognised, it appears that the native-speaker teachers view students as being on a kind of continuum of interlanguage toward a standardised form, rather than developing competence in ELF.

**The Discourse of native speaker English**

Across the three data chapters, the analysis identified the existence of a discourse of native speaker English. Students, as ‘non-native’ speakers of English, are ignored by the coursebook and the teachers. There are no representations of non-native speakers using English proficiently in *Hemispheres 2*. This is despite overwhelming evidence that non-native speakers are the predominant users of English particularly in EFL contexts. Nor are proficient users being utilised in the
classrooms by the teachers. Furthermore, the teachers and the coursebook authors appear to be unaware that they are imposing their versions of English use on students and not engaging with students’ English language use.

The approach of the coursebook to English language use is monolithic in that it is presented as unitary and standard, and hegemonic in that it is presented as the unquestioned dominant form of English with associated Anglo-cultural norms. The coursebook authors show no awareness of their production choices as being problematic. The power differential is immediately apparent in the coursebook authors’ positioning of themselves as expert users of English and the positioning of students as inexpert learners of English and achieved through mechanisms such as modality, lexicality, and transitivity as demonstrated in Chapter Six. Several students in the study appear to take up these positionings unproblematically, while simultaneously reporting their diverse uses of English and demonstrating culturally nuanced understandings of the Conversation Strategies.

The teachers’ predominant focus on grammar and linguistic structure presupposes universal norms of English language use in contrast with this study’s findings that language use is diverse and does not always conform to Anglo-cultural norms. As noted previously, teachers are working from their own socialised English language use. Their judgement about what is right or not is that they used it before in their own context of English language use. Ironically, this shows the centrality of context in terms of linguistic choice making. Yet teachers do not seem to be aware of this. The teachers are native speakers from dominant contexts of English language use in that English is considered to be the ‘native’ language (ENL), that is, America, Canada, and South Africa, where English language learners are expected to adopt the ENL norms of use. The monolithic English of their ENL context and associated English language standards appears to extend with native speakers as they travel the world teaching English. It is because of their native speaker status that teachers do not have to question their English language use and their teaching of it or consider how things are done in Thailand in English. If native speakers’ contexts are seen to determine English language use and associated language choices, then teachers would see no need to explore contextual language use, that is, pragmatics. These findings offer a significant contribution to the ongoing debate regarding native speaker and non-native speaker teachers and add weight to the argument that non-
native speaker teachers may be better prepared to teach English language in use in their own contexts.

Evident in the analysis was the tendency by most teachers to construct the students’ knowledge of and competency in English as lacking. Generalisations are evident in the data whereby the teachers aggregate all students into categories such as uncritical and as less competent. The generalisations are reductive and highlight deficit positions. The teachers’ representations are at odds with the student data which show that students do question the Conversation Strategies beyond what is presented. The interview data indicates that the students are actively trying to make sense of the Conversation Strategies beyond the linguistic that is foregrounded in the coursebook and teaching. Yet surprisingly, students appear to have been co-opted into the hegemonic discourse of native speaker English and discount their own diverse and competent uses of English. They appear to have bought into the discourse’s underlying “trenchant deficit orientation towards non-native English” (Jenkins, 2013).

9.2.4 ELT Methodology and Pragmatics

A further constraint in the teaching and learning of pragmatics is the methodology employed by the coursebook and teachers to teach pragmatics. Noticeably absent from the coursebook and the teachers’ classroom practices was the opportunity for students to explore the contextual features and various meanings conveyed in English language use. The study revealed that the use of a Presentation Practice Production (PPP) methodology for the teaching of the Conversation Strategies constrained students in terms of their willingness and ability to ask questions about the meaning and appropriate use of the phrases presented in the Conversation Strategies. It was observed that the teachers’ reluctance to engage in explanatory teacher talk or dialogue with students regarding the Conversation Strategies withheld opportunities that might have facilitated more open enquiries and discussion of culture and language use. This is demonstrated in the more dialogic nature of their interviews, where students asked questions about the meaning and use of the Conversation Strategies and shared how they applied the Conversation Strategies in various ways to different contexts of use. A dialogic approach to the teaching of pragmatics could provide students and teachers with opportunities to engage with English language use in more globally relevant and meaningfully ways.
The naturalised and naturalising discourses of a monolithic native speaker English, global ELT coursebooks, and native speaker teachers means that teachers do not question or interrogate English language use. Furthermore, it appears that teachers do not have the tools to do this. The perception appears to be that language teachers teach structure – grammar and vocabulary – with the assumption that language is somehow separate from society and not socially constructed. Therefore, teachers do not see the need to address the social variables of language use. The teacher interview data revealed that knowledge of pragmatics and the culturally situated nature of language use were not foregrounded in the short courses undertaken by the teachers in the study. This highlights the need to revisit the ongoing conversations about how effective CELTA and similar short courses are at producing language teachers for the field and what needs to be offered to augment what is a very basic introduction to ELT. As Baxter (2003, p. 114) notes in referring to short TESOL courses, “the imposition of an arbitrary time constraint has deeper consequences, which are connected with the way the courses treat different types of knowledge and the status of theory and practice”.

9.2.5 EFL students as strategic English language users

A key finding from this study is that the students did not take up the coursebook and classroom representations of English language use as presented to them. Rather the students were found to be agentive and strategic in their uptake of the Conversation Strategies and associated language. As agents, students were selectively and strategically mining the opportunities presented in the Conversation Strategies and associated classroom activities for their own purposes and uses of English outside the classroom in diverse local, regional, and international contexts.

Studies in English Language Teaching and Second Language Acquisition have continued to position students as deficient, lacking in pragmatic awareness, as learners rather than users (Cook, 2002; Firth & Wagner, 1997). Contrary to these deficit views of the students, the students in this study were found to be creatively and competently making meaning of the Conversation Strategies for various social, professional and educational purposes. Furthermore, the data shows students as actively engaged in English language use in various ways in their everyday lives, that is, as English language users (Cook, 2002). This study showed the multiplicity of ways that students are using English outside the classroom. Students were drawing
on all their language learning experiences and needs, including the Conversation Strategies and other parts of their course in diverse spatial and temporal contexts. Furthermore, students were able to dynamically adapt linguistic structures foregrounded in the coursebook and the classroom to contexts outside the classroom. Students are localising what is being offered by the coursebook and teachers. They are recontextualising to their own cultures.

Overwhelmingly, students’ uptake of the various phrases presented in the coursebook was found to be contingent upon their prior experience with English and contexts of English language use. Most students chose to focus on the phrases in the Conversation Strategies that were already familiar to them. Some students actively tried to remember new phrases drawing on familiar phrases and the context to help them with their learning. However, some students had limited repertoires to draw from and as such were limited in the linguistic choices they could make. Several students mentioned a limited knowledge of vocabulary as being their biggest challenge in speaking. Students’ understandings of the dynamics of English language use varied. In the absence of explanations in the coursebook and by the teachers, some students drew on their exposure to English through movies and television series to make decisions about the applicability of particular phrases to particular contexts. Most students made comparisons between English and Thai to determine what they would say in a given situation. Several students made assumptions about the suitability of phrases based on their understanding of English language modality and the apparent grammatical complexity of the sentences.

9.2.6 Summary

In summary, this thesis makes several significant and timely contributions to the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) in addressing the complex nature of English language teaching, learning and pragmatics in an EFL context. Firstly, this study makes a contribution to the field by bringing together what has often been detached and disconnected in research. The application of Fairclough’s CDA (2001, 2003) has enabled investigation into social practice, specifically, the complexities and contradictions within the lived practice of English language teaching and learning in an EFL context with adult learners.

Furthermore, pragmatics-related research in the field of ELT has tended to focus on the types of activities in coursebooks and classrooms that are given to
students to enhance their pragmatic awareness. This predominantly materials-based research has not considered how teachers perceive and teach the materials or how students take up the materials and teaching and make sense of them in relation to their use of English outside the classroom in the local Thai context. I argue that more ethnographically-informed understandings are needed if the seemingly discordant practices of teaching, learning and use of English in EFL contexts are to be addressed. In light of globalisation and the global spread of English language use, the pragmatic features of English need to be understood and framed by the context in which they are being used.

The analysis undertaken in this study has allowed the tensions in the coursebook’s design and teachers’ classroom practice to be identified. It suggests a productive way of thinking about coursebook design for EFL contexts, in terms of what contexts could potentially be offered in presenting English language use. Instead of assuming contexts of English language use to be irrelevant to language use, this thesis has shown that the contexts of the coursebook authors, the teachers and students play a central role in their linguistic decision-making. With these understandings, coursebooks should actively encourage discussion of context and its role in language use and offer a gateway into discussions of language and culture.

The study contributes to knowledge of ‘native speaker’ teachers’ practices of pragmatics in private English language schools in EFL contexts including representations of EFL student language use and views on appropriacy of the coursebook in terms of speaking activities and pragmatic relevance. It highlights a gap in teachers’ pedagogical knowledge, their knowledge of pragmatics and their knowledge of their students’ uses of English.

Finally, the study makes a significant contribution to understandings of students’ uses of English and their strategic intake of the coursebook content and the teachers’ classroom input. Far from being passive ‘recipients’ of the coursebook’s and teachers’ knowledge, the students are strategically mediating their input for diverse purposes and uses of English outside the classroom. Students’ decision making with respect to the Conversation Strategies was diverse, dynamic and contextual demonstrating an obvious concern with pragmatics.
9.3 METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The methodological implications of this study are its contribution to CDA research, its contribution to Applied Pragmatics research in ELT, and its contribution to analytic method. In terms of CDA research, the contributions of the study are to CDA studies in applied linguistics and “high context” CDA studies (Rogers & Schaenen, 2014, p. 132). Firstly, this study contributes to CDA studies in applied linguistics by considering the application and uptake of a coursebook in EFL classrooms. Lin (2014) noted that while CDA studies have been conducted on textbooks in applied linguistics, these studies have not considered the use and uptake of the textbooks by school participants. My study adds to this much needed area of focus by considering coursebooks, classroom practices, and teacher and student perspectives. Secondly, the consideration of context in this study, involving the coursebook, teachers, and students and the institutional and social structures within which they act, counters the argument that CDA is primarily stripped of context with analysis focusing on texts in isolation (Blommaert, 2005; Verschueren, 2001). This is evident in the inclusion of teachers’ and students’ practices and perspectives of coursebooks; rich description of the institutional, local, and broader social contexts; and the levels of analysis in the data chapters, connecting micro, meso and macro levels.

As noted in Chapter Two, pragmatics-related research in the field of ELT has tended to draw on a component view of pragmatics. As such, this study makes a unique contribution in that it draws on a broad definition of pragmatics taking into account social, cultural, and cognitive factors in meaning making. Viewing pragmatics in this way enabled me to identify the elements of English language in use that are being foregrounded and those that are not.

The study’s unique contribution to adopting a critical discourse analytic approach to the data is its application of Verschueren’s theory of pragmatics to CDA as a method of textual analysis. Detailed textual analysis of the elements of pragmatics in the coursebook enabled me as researcher to identify the contextual and structural variables foregrounded in the coursebook’s representations of English language in use. Utilising pragmatics in analysis of coursebooks, particularly contextual and structural variables, shows the contexts and varieties of English language use that are privileged and those that are ignored. As such, it can provide a
more nuanced understanding of the relevance and applicability of coursebooks and associated materials to certain learner groups.

9.4 LIMITATIONS

A limitation of the methodology utilised for this study is the generalisability of the research, given the small number of participants and the single context of the study. Richards (2003) highlights the problematic nature of balancing the need in qualitative research to document what is unique and particular in a research context with its wider relevance to other settings. Instead of generalisability, Richards (2003) contends that the aim of qualitative research should be ‘resonance’ whereby connection to new contexts is made through the provision of enough detail to allow other researchers to “share in the researcher’s understandings and find instantiations of them in their own professional experience” (p. 266). This study aimed to achieve this through rich description of the context and the participants’ perspectives. The private language school involved in the study is representative of some EFL contexts in that it has a coursebook-driven curriculum, ‘native-speaker’ teachers, and students who use English in diverse ways outside the classroom. Therefore, it will resonate and offer connections to other sites and situations.

Another potential limitation is the limited time period for data collection – seven months. This period of time cannot capture all teaching of pragmatics and experiences of using and learning English in EFLs contexts. However, it does follow the ‘life’ of one coursebook that is widely-used in EFL classrooms and the design of the study involves multiple data sources in order to make the data as comprehensive as possible.

Another consideration is my position as researcher and the processes of conducting the research with particular types of data and its analysis and interpretation. My influence as researcher was addressed through reflection in the field notes and research journal, and was accounted for in the analysis employing critical reflexivity (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Acknowledging researcher positioning is integral to qualitative research and is a crucial step in CDA (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2003).
9.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

This study has contributed important insights into the complexity of students’ interpretations and uptake of pragmatics in response to the use of global ELT coursebooks and practices of native speaker teachers in private English language schools in EFL contexts. In the subsequent sections, I outline implications for practice in relation to ELT coursebook design, ELT pedagogy, and ELT teacher education and professional development.

ELT Coursebook Design

The production of global ELT coursebooks substantially influences what is then offered in ELT classrooms in EFL contexts. As demonstrated in this study, *Hemispheres 2* provided very little in the way of appropriate contextual information for EFL learners. Indeed, it was found to offer no models of proficient non-native English language users or international contexts of English language use. The implications for designing global ELT coursebooks for students in EFL contexts include:

- Ensuring consultation with EFL learners in their contexts of use during the process of drafting and producing coursebooks to reflect the diversity of contexts in which English is used globally;
- Representing proficient non-native speakers of English and international contexts in conversation models;
- Providing explicit explanations of the use of particular phrases and expressions in varied situations;
- Providing definitions of less commonly used vocabulary including idiomatic language;
- Providing explicit information for teachers on how to teach English language in use with an emphasis on their students’ contexts and English language needs; and
- Incorporating up-to-date empirically-based methodologies for teaching spoken interaction that include a focus on building pragmatic awareness.
ELT Pedagogy

In addition to coursebook design, various implications for teaching derive from this study. Drawing on Verschueren’s (1999) theory of pragmatics, I have shown how the five teachers in this study emphasised structure in their teaching of pragmatics and how their representation of context and dynamics was reductive. The study revealed that teachers relied heavily on the coursebook, had limited pedagogical content knowledge of pragmatics, showed limited knowledge of their students’ contexts of English language use, and demonstrated limited intercultural awareness.

The gaps identified above highlight the need for teachers to seek ways to engage with their students and learn more about their understandings of culture and the contexts in which they are using or intend to use English. The implications for ELT pedagogy include:

- providing students with pragmatic information that can be applied to English language use outside the classroom. For this to happen, teachers need to have a greater understanding of their students’ use of English outside the classroom. Teachers need to engage with the diversity in their classroom rather than assume all students will do things in uniform ways. Teachers need to actively seek and incorporate more input from the students – negotiate with them to devise relevant contexts of use for practice in class – and in so doing, acknowledge students’ individuality as well as some shared contexts.
- Adopting the alternative strong version of CLT would align more closely to the teaching of pragmatics enabling learners to experience how language is constructed and operates in communication.
- Seeking alternatives to the PPP methodology foregrounded in the coursebook.

ELT Teacher Training, Education, and Professional Development

The findings from this study can inform teacher training, education and professional development with regards to the teaching of pragmatics in EFL contexts, particularly in relation to the use of global ELT coursebooks. The study found that teachers had little awareness or understanding of pragmatics. All teachers
said that it was not a feature of their training. Suggestions for ELT Teacher Training, Education, and Professional Development include:

- Ways of developing greater knowledge of students’ contexts of English language use. This could include having students’ share how and in what situations they use English outside the classroom.

- The development of teachers’ intercultural awareness through professional development workshops and taking an explicitly comparative intercultural approach to teaching pragmatics.

- Demonstrations of how to teach pragmatics in ways that take into consideration students’ contexts, students’ ability to remember and recall linguistic structures, and the contextual information needed to make appropriate linguistic choices. This might involve a comparative approach to teaching language use as it engages with students’ real life diversity and real life language use rather than generalising and glossing over cultural elements.

- The incorporation of pedagogical practice and theory into TESOL short courses that aligns with current research into language education.

- Ways of using classroom discourse, that is, language in interaction, to extend students’ language learning.

- Ways of adapting global ELT coursebooks for the context in which they are teaching English.

9.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has revealed several areas of potential for further research. My recommendations for future research into pragmatics in EFL contexts include:

1. Exploring ways to make space for pragmatics in forthcoming ELT coursebooks. Finding ways to extend the current focus on structure to include considerations of context, dynamics, and salience would provide evidence-based possibilities from which teachers and coursebook designers can learn.

2. Research into using pragmatics focused activities with students that allow development of metapragmatic awareness.
3. Research into the role of context in language learning.

4. Exploring more fully the relationship between intercultural awareness and pragmatics.

5. Research into students’ contexts of English language use in EFL contexts.

Further research in these areas would extend current understandings of pragmatics in EFL contexts. A key insight is the need for coursebooks and teachers to move away from a narrow linguistic definition of English and English language use and towards a greater engagement with students’ contexts and uses of English.
References


Appendices

Appendix A: Conversation Strategy Student Book Example (Cameron, Renn, et al., 2008, p. 71)

**CONVERSATION STRATEGY** Using Exclamations to Express Opinions

Ω **A.** Listen and practice. Then practice again using the other expressions.

A: I have a great idea for my 25th birthday. I plan to bungee-jump off a bridge!

B: Cool! Bungee-jumping sounds like a fun way to celebrate an important birthday!

C: Are you out of your mind? You can't trust the safety equipment they give you.

* Good for you!
* Sweet!
* Awesome!
* That's amazing / exciting / great / wonderful / fantastic!
* What a/an _____ idea!

Ω **B.** Pair work. Continue these conversations with a partner. First react positively. Then switch roles and react negatively. Give information to explain your opinion.

1. A: What are you cooking?
   B: I'm making up a new recipe. It's a soup made of everything that was in my refrigerator.
   A: . . .

2. A: I sent out applications for 15 jobs. How many are you applying for?
   B: Just one.
   A: . . .

3. A: Did you know that Maria is starting her own business?
   B: You're kidding! What kind of business?
   A: A restaurant. Unfortunately, she doesn't know much about running a business . . . or about cooking!
   B: . . .

Ω **C.** Group work. Discuss a risky activity that you or someone you know participated in. Use exclamations to show your opinion about the activities people describe. Explain your opinion.

Example: A: Last weekend, I rode my motorcycle without a helmet.
   B: Are you serious? It's against the law here.
   C: That's risky! I'm glad you didn't get hurt!
Appendix B: Conversation Strategy Workbook Example (Johannsen, 2008, p. 48)

**CONVERSATION STRATEGY** Using Exclamations to Express Opinions

A ➔ **Identify.** Write each expression in the correct column in the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are you out of your mind?</th>
<th>Are you serious?</th>
<th>Awesome!</th>
<th>How excited!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good for you!</td>
<td>Have you lost your mind?</td>
<td>That's a crazy idea!</td>
<td>That's amazing!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How terrifying!</td>
<td>I can't believe it!</td>
<td>That's wonderful!</td>
<td>You're joking!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That's great!</td>
<td>That's risky!</td>
<td>That's dangerous!</td>
<td>That's ridiculous!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You're kidding!</td>
<td>That's dangerous!</td>
<td>That's ridiculous!</td>
<td>How foolish!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Positive Exclamations**  
**Exclamations of Disbelief**  
**Negative Exclamations**

---

B ➔ **Write.** Write conversations for the situations. Use expressions from Activity A.

1. Mrs. Smith: Well, I got my skateboard, finally!
   
   **Her grandson:**

   **Her son:**

2. Dan: I got the scholarship! I'm so happy!
   
   **His best friend:**

   **His girlfriend:**

3. Jennie: That's where I want to go—Africa! And a camping safari sounds great!
   
   **Her mother:**

   **Her father:**

---

48 Unit B On the Edge
Appendix C: Conversation Strategy Teacher’s Manual Example (Renn & Cameron, 2008, p. T71)

CONVERSATION STRATEGY  Using Exclamations to Express Opinions

Language Note

The two phrases Are you out of your mind? and Have you lost your mind? should be used carefully. They can be insulting in formal situations or if said in a serious or insulting tone. If they are used with friends, or in informal situations and said in a friendly way showing excitement and curiosity, they are not insulting.

A - Listen and practice.

Class CD 7, Week 14

- Point out the conversation and the photo. Ask the students to guess/imagine what the three women are talking about based on the photo alone.
- Make sure they understand that the words and phrases near the dialogue sentences can be substituted for the words in bold. For example, Awesome! can be substituted for God!
- Tell the students to read the conversation silently. Give them an opportunity to ask for clarification of anything they do not understand.
- Play the recording of the conversation.
- Choose three students to read the conversation in front of the class. Choose a second trio to read the conversation with some of the alternate expressions.
- Put the students in trios. Have them read the conversation to each other. Then have them read it again using the other phrases. Make sure they switch roles.
- Walk around the classroom co-coaching the students to read the conversation with natural stress and intonation.

B - Pair work.

- Read the instructions to the students.
- Make sure that they understand that they will be doing each conversation twice. The first time A will react positively, for example with Cool! the second time A will react negatively, for example with Are you out of your mind?
- As a class, do the first conversation together.
- Put the students in pairs and tell them to do all three of the conversations. Remind the students to change roles so that both students have the opportunity to use positive and negative exclamations.
- Remind the students to use the target expressions.
- Ask for volunteers to do the conversations in front of the class.

C - Group work.

- Read the instructions to the students. Have three students read the example.
- Put the students in small groups and tell them to take turns describing someone’s risky behavior, either their own or someone else’s.
- Ask for volunteers to describe their risky activities to the class.
Appendix D: Conversation Strategy Workbook Key Example (Renn & Cameron, 2008, p. T120)

Conversation Strategy


Appendix E: Teacher Interview Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Interview</th>
<th>Date of Interview</th>
<th>Place of Interview</th>
<th>Setting of Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewer</td>
<td>Position of Interviewer</td>
<td>Interviewee</td>
<td>Position of Interviewee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Background**
- How long have you been teaching English? Where have you taught? What ages/levels have you taught?
- Where are you from?
- What kind of training did you do? Was it useful for you as a teacher?
- You’re in Thailand. How’s your Thai? Have you learned any other languages?
- How has your own language learning experience influenced how you teach English, in particular spoken interaction?
- In your training, did you learn about pragmatics (appropriate spoken interaction)?
- If yes, how do you use that in your teaching? Is any of it useful? Which parts?
- If no, did your training include anything about speaking, interactions, talk-in-interaction? If yes, what?
- What do you think Ss need to be pragmatically competent (to be able to communicate appropriately in English)? (accent/formulaic expressions/vocab/grammar)
- What sort of conversations do you think are most important (e.g. greetings)?
- How do you see your responsibility for teaching that?
- How do you utilize the coursebook to do it?

**Teaching conversation strategies**
- The coursebook has a section called conversation strategies. What do you think they mean by conversation strategies? What do you understand by the term conversation strategies?
- What were your goals for learners for this level in terms of teaching the conversation strategies?
- How did you go about achieving these goals?
- What did you want the students to learn about conversation strategies?
- What do you think students learned from the lesson about conversation strategies?

**The coursebook and conversation strategies**
- How do you use the coursebook to teach conversation strategies?
  - Straight up
  - Select
  - Omit
  - Adapt
  - Add
- Do you have any difficulties when using this coursebook to teach:
  - The dialogues? If yes, what?
  - The conversation strategies (the language)? If yes, what?
- What do you think of the conversation strategies in the coursebook? (Refer to coursebook and workbook and any supplementary materials used in class)
- How useful do you think the conversation strategies are for the students?
- What other strategies or skills do you think students need to successfully interact in
English?

• What extra information would be useful to have in the conversation strategies lessons in the coursebook?

• You’ve taught [insert number] conversation strategies this term. Do you think they were useful for students? Why or why not?

A particular conversation in the coursebook

• What about this particular conversation...what do you think is going on here in terms of the context? Who/what/where? (Refer to relevant page in coursebook)

• What do you think is the most important aspect of this conversation strategy for students? Why?

• Each conversation strategy has options and the options are presented as interchangeable (refer to choices given in the conversation dialogue). Would you agree with this? If not, how do you see them as different?

• Which of the options given do you think students would use or want to use? Why?

• Are there any other aspects of the conversation you think are important for students? Any problem areas?

• What supplementary material or information would be useful to have in the coursebook or teaching manual for teaching these conversation strategies?

• I noticed that you left some things in and something out in terms of the language from the coursebook. Why? What criteria do you use to make those decisions?

ANY OTHER COMMENTS...
Appendix F: Student Interview Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Interview</th>
<th>Date of Interview</th>
<th>Place of Interview</th>
<th>Setting of Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewer</td>
<td>Position of Interviewer</td>
<td>Interviewee</td>
<td>Position of Interviewee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interview Questions:**

**First Term only:**

**The student’s background**
- Do you work? If so, what do you do exactly?
- How long have you been learning English? How/where?
- Why are you studying English now? What do you want to learn specifically? Why do you need English?
- Do you use English outside the classroom? If yes, what do you use it for?
- How often do you use English to talk with other people?
- Who do you talk with? Where are they from? What languages do they speak?
- What kinds of skills do you think you need when you’re talking with people in English?
- What do you usually talk about in English? (common topics, types of conversations etc)
- What difficulties or problems do you have when you talk in English outside the classroom?
- Do your English classes help you with your difficulties or problems? How?
- What else do you do to help you with your difficulties?
- What do you think of the conversation strategy lessons in the coursebook (in general)? *(Refer to coursebook, also refer to previous book – the blue book – if relevant)*
  - How about the dialogues/the examples?
  - How about the language?
- Are the conversation strategy lessons useful? Are they helping you with your English use outside the classroom?
- If yes, how are they useful? If not, why not?
- How could they be more useful? What would be helpful? What do you want to learn more about?
- Do you ever use the coursebook outside the classroom?

**First and subsequent terms:**

**The conversation strategies**
- What do you think conversation strategies means?
- Why do you think these conversation strategies are in the coursebook? What do they want you to learn?
- Each conversation strategy has a lot of phrases. Do you try to remember them all or just a few? How do you learn/remember them?
- What do you think of the ordering of the conversations, is that always clear?
- Do you like to hear the audio? Why or why not?
- What about accent? Which accent do you prefer? Why?
- How important is it that you’re learning American English?
- Your teacher this term is from.... what do you think about his/her accent?
• In general, where do you think the conversation strategies are taking place? Do you think the language users in the conversations are all from the same country or different countries?

The coursebook and the conversation lessons
• You’ve looked at (insert number) conversation strategies this term (Refer to relevant pages in coursebook). Did you find them useful? Why or why not?
• What did you learn from the lessons?
• Have you tried these conversation strategies outside the classroom? If yes, how did it go? If not, why not?

A particular conversation in the coursebook (as determined by the answers given above)
• What do you think is going on in this conversation? (Refer to relevant page in coursebook)
• What is most important for you in this conversation? Why?
• How would you do this conversation in Thai? Is there anything that would be different? If so, what would be different?
• Do you have this many options to talk about this in Thai?
• Would you use the conversation strategy outside the classroom? Who would you use it with? In what situations?
• Which of these options would you use (refer to choices given in the conversation dialogue)? Why?
• How are these options different do you think?
• Was the class about this conversation strategy useful?
• If yes, how was it useful?

ANY OTHER COMMENTS...
Appendix G: Teacher Interview Excerpt

AS: Talk me through why you decided to do the lesson the way you did. Like...

Matt: Um.

AS: You sort of presented the language and then gave them options...

Matt: Because I know it’s something they’re already familiar with.

AS: Yeah?

Matt: Yeah. Because I always hear Thai people talk about prefer, prefer. So I know they already had a grasp on it. So that’s why I did it.

AS: Yeah.

Matt: To be honest with you, that’s the only reason I did the conversation strategy period.

AS: Ahh.

Matt: Because I knew that they already had a background in it.

AS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay.

Matt: If they didn’t have a background with it already...

AS: You wouldn’t have...

Matt: I would have completely skipped it.

AS: Yeah, okay.

Matt: And you saw it worked like I thought it worked really well but I also know they had the background.

AS: Yeah.

Matt: Like trying other ones, like agreeing and disagreeing, well from a cultural standpoint, Thais don’t like to disagree. So teaching that is really hard. I usually skip it. They can agree all day long, but their familiarity with disagreeing is being quiet. So...

AS: So you tried that a little bit today you were saying. So how did that go?

Matt: They all agreed.

AS: They all agreed?

(Matt: Interview 1, 15/12/12)
Appendix H: Matt’s Handout for the Conversation Strategy Asking about and Expressing Preferences

Would you rather...(I would rather...)

See an action movie or a romance movie?

Go to the beach or the mountains?

Get a tattoo or a piercing?

Get plastic surgery or stay natural?

Go to RCA or a temple on Saturday night?

Do you prefer...(I prefer...)

Japanese food or Italian food?

A man or a woman?

Android or iPhone?

Dressing up or dressing casual?

Pop music or rock and roll music?
Appendix I: Student Interview Transcript

Bee

AS: The first thing I wanted to ask you is “What do you do?”.
Bee: I’m a student and study in University.
AS: Okay. Which university?
Bee: XXX University.
AS: Aah. What are you studying?
Bee: I’m study about making film.
AS: Making film?
Bee: Yeah.
AS: Oh. Fabulous. So, what kind of film?
Bee: That I study is all about multimedia and digital media include film.
AS: Excellent. Is it... do you like it?
Bee: Yeah. I like taking photos.
AS: Yeah, me too. I love taking photos. Yeah. Excellent. Okay. So how long have you been learning English?
Bee: How long? Oh since I, since Prathom.
AS: Aha. Year 1 or later?
Bee: Prathom 1.
AS: Prathom 1. Okay.
AS: So phonology right. Phonetics. Sounds. Yeah. But that’s normal in Prathom. I think, learning that. So where have you, outside of school, have you studied English?
Bee: This is first.
AS: This is the first place. Okay, XXX. So when did you start at XXX?
Bee: Er, level 5. Er, around 1 year.
AS: 1 year ago? So, level 5. That was the blue book yeah?
Bee: Yes.
AS: The blue Hemispheres. Excellent. Okay. So um and why are you studying English?
Bee: Because my English is bad. It’s very bad. And my mother got certificate of this.
AS: From here?
Bee: Yes.
AS: Yeah?
Bee: And my mother want to er want to I got too.
AS: As well. Okay. So do you use English outside XXX?
Bee: Yes, I use English for help foreigner and about my class of university have bilingual.
AS: Really?
Bee: Yes. I have to use English and I want to go abroad.
AS: Oh. Okay. So you’ve got lots of things happening?
Bee: Yes.
AS: So, when you say at Uni, it’s bilingual. Do you use English... when do you use English at university?
Bee: Er, presentations...of my film
AS: So some of your assignments are in English?
Bee: Yeah.
AS: How about your textbooks? Are your textbooks in English or?
Bee: Textbooks. Mmm. Textbooks don’t have.
AS: Usually don’t. Okay. And your presentations are in English. Um are any of your lectures in English?
Bee: Lectures English. Sometimes.
AS: Sometimes? So are all your teachers Thai? Or some?
Bee: Thai.
AS: All Thai.
Bee: All Thai, but they speak English.
AS: But they speak English. Okay.
Bee: Sometimes.
AS: Sometimes.
Bee: Yes.
AS: How often? The whole lecture or maybe just a little bit of the lecture or many lectures.
Bee: I have many lectures, but English in a little bit.
AS: Just a little bit within one lecture.
Bee: Yes.
AS: Okay. That’s good to know. So you said when we talked before and again today that sometimes you use English to talk with foreigners. What do you talk about?
Bee: I talk about the way and the train and BTS.
AS: Okay. So, do they come to you or do you see that they are lost and try to help them?
Bee: Er, sometimes they come to me but sometimes I come to help.
AS: To help them. That’s very nice of you. So when you come to them, what do you say?
Bee: “Can I help you?”
AS: “Can I help you?” Very nice. Okay. So do you find that scary? Or...
Bee: Um. I’m scary but I think they want help.
AS: So you help them. That’s great. Excellent. And do you have any problems understanding them or do they have any problems understanding you when you talk?
Bee: Er, my vocab. I don’t. I forget vocabulary and I think sometimes they don’t understand me. Because my, I think the easy vocab. I think they don’t understand me, it’s my vocab.
AS: So do you think, you sometimes use a word, um and actually there’s a better word, but you don’t know what that word is, is that what you mean?
Bee: Yes.
AS: Okay. So when um I, I have the same experience in Thai. Sometimes I want to speak in Thai but I can’t remember the word so I try to say something different and maybe it’s not clear. But I think that’s a good strategy, to use different words when you don’t know the actual word. It’s a good strategy. Okay, so um, so when you speak with foreigners, who do you talk with,
who do you, um, are they from America, do you think or maybe Europe?

Bee: I think America. I think.
AS: You think, but not sure.
Bee: Not sure.
AS: Okay and um do you understand them when they speak to you?
Bee: Er, I can guess. Yes. Er.
AS: Okay. Excellent. Okay so you mentioned vocabulary... do you think you need other skills when you are talking in English?
Bee: Skills. I’m not sure.
AS: So like um, do you think maybe you need... okay so you need vocabulary, what about grammar, listening and?
Bee: Grammar, listening and I’m not good.
AS: You don’t think?
Bee: My grammar is very bad. I like to forget.
AS: It’s to forget though because the grammar is difficult right?
Bee: Sometimes I think it’s not difficult but I think my remember is a problem.
AS: (laughter). I understand. I very much understand. Okay, so if the memory is a problem. Is it easier just to remember one thing at a time? We’ll come back to that actually. Don’t worry about that. What about pronunciation?
Bee: Pronunciation.
AS: Do you think...?
Bee: Pronunciation of foreigners or?
AS: Pronunciation of... your pronunciation.
Bee: Oh. My pronunciation. My teacher tell me, told me my pronunciation is better than other friends. But I think at XXX, my friends is better than me.
AS: Really?
Bee: Yes.
AS: I think your pronunciation is very good actually.
Bee: Oh.
AS: Yeah. Um, so your friends at school, at university, so you’re probably better at University than many of your friends. But here you worry that you’re not.
Bee: Yes.
AS: That’s it. Okay. We talked about that. Let’s... I have lots and lots of questions, but we don’t have time for all of them. So do your English classes help you with your problems when you’re talking in English?
Bee: You mean here or...?
AS: Yeah, here at XXX.
Bee: Oh. It can help me a lot. And I er I’m not shy.
AS: Not shy here?
Bee: Not shy here.
AS: That’s good.
Bee: Yes, but at University I’m less shy.
AS: Ahh. Okay. So you feel more comfortable at University. Oh no, less comfortable at University.
AS: More at university? More shy?
Bee: No less shy.
AS: Less shy at university. Okay. Okay because you are more
confident at university.
Bee: Yes.
F: I see. Okay. Excellent. Sorry, that’s good. So why?
Bee: Because I I have conversations with friends with a lot of
foreigners. It make me make me ker arai I can’t speak it in
English. Maybe I’m comfortable and “chin”. Chin.
AS: I don’t know about “chin” but I will look it up. Chin.
Bee: Often use. Because often to use, it’s chin.
AS: Aah. Okay. It’s, it’s... I think I understand what you’re saying.
So because you use English often at University or...
Bee: At here.
AS: Here?
Bee: Yes. Make me at university is...
AS: More confident.
Bee: Yes.
AS: Aah. Okay. Because you have more practice?
Bee: Yes.
AS: Yeah? Okay. I understand. Sorry. Thank you. So but I’m going
to look up this word chin. This is good. Um, okay. So I want to
talk about the coursebook but in particular I want to talk about
these lessons, the conversation strategy lessons. Do you
remember these from the blue book?
Bee: Ohh.
AS: You know. It’s at the end, just before the writing, there’s always
a conversation strategy – every chapter. Right? Can you
remember these?
Bee: Some, some, some units.
AS: Yeah? Some units? Okay. Maybe we’ll go to the end. Because
that was probably the last one. So asking for, giving advice, so
what’s here? Explaining a process, do you remember this?
Bee: Er a little bit.
AS: Okay. That’s okay. That’s okay. So um, asking for and giving
recommendations, I don’t know if you even did these in class.
Maybe you didn’t do these in class. But we did this term. We
did one this term I think. Um, so what do you think of those
lessons? If you can remember.
Bee: Um, I think it’s good for me.
AS: Yeah.
Bee: And it can help me a lot...
AS: Yeah.
Bee: For my lifestyle.
Bee: It have a lot of vocab and grammar and conversation. And it
make me know about the sentence that I don’t know before.
After I read it, I think it can it can make me know a lot.
AS: Okay. Excellent. Okay, you mentioned the grammar, the vocabulary and some sentences or questions that are useful.

Bee: Um.

AS: Okay, so um I’m just thinking. So if we look at this for example, what do you think of, of the whole conversation?

Bee: Erm.

AS: So this one is talking about asking about and expressing preferences. So what do you think of the dialogue here?

Bee: I think it’s er ker arai? It can use for my life.

AS: Ahh. Okay. So how?

Bee: It’s real.

AS: It’s real? Okay. So in what way? Like how do you think you might use this information to talk about preferences.

Bee: Again please.

AS: Um how... okay, so you said this is useful for the real world. Um, how is it useful?

Bee: Ohhh. It’s... in Thai, I use it, same Thai grammar.

AS: Aha.

Bee: And it’s same.

AS: It’s the same. So you would... this conversation is the same in Thai?

Bee: Yes.

AS: That’s interesting. Excellent. So we’ll talk more about that in a minute. Um, what, I’m just thinking. Um, what do you think about the situation here? What’s the situation? Is that important to you? This... what’s happening here in this picture?

Bee: This is an airplane.

AS: An airplane. Aha.

Bee: And the situation er I think it can use in other situations.

AS: So even though maybe you wouldn’t talk about window seat and aisle seat in an airplane, you can apply it to other situations? And that’s okay?

Bee: Aha.

AS: Yeah.

Bee: Aha.

AS: Okay, good. Excellent. So you did this one lesson, sorry I’m just going to check the time because I don’t want you to be late. Okay, one more minute. We looked at this conversation strategy. And you like this conversation strategy. Now. Okay. Now just quickly. You didn’t do this conversation strategy. About starting conversations. Do you think this might have been useful?

Bee: Er. I never read this page.

AS: That’s okay. Because I think XXX decided not to do it in class. Um.

Bee: I think it’s useful.

AS: Why?

Bee: Because it can use in real world.

AS: In the real world. So in the future, when do you think you might use some of these real world conversations?
Bee: Again please.
AS: In the future, you said that this can be used in the real world and same with the other one. When do you think you might use them?
Bee: I think you mean this conversation.
AS: The language, yeah this conversation. Do you think you would use it here in Thailand or maybe in when you study abroad?
Bee: I think all, in Thai or study abroad or all of these.
AS: Okay, in Thailand, when do you think you would use it in Thailand?
Bee: I think I can use it today.
AS: Really?
Bee: Because I don’t know in the future, in the next time what will happen.
AS: True. Absolutely. Okay so if you see a foreigner and maybe they need help...
Bee: Yes.
AS: Maybe you need to know how to start a conversation or maybe they want some advice which shopping centre should I go to. I prefer Platinum or I prefer MBK?
Bee: Yes.
AS: Yeah. Excellent. Thank you so much. I don’t want you to be late for your class. So we can finish there.

(Bee: Interview 1, 9/12/12)
### Appendix J: Summary of students’ accounts of their English language use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Past use of English</th>
<th>Current use of English</th>
<th>Future use of English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bee</td>
<td>Primary School and High School in Thailand</td>
<td>With Thai friends and family, giving directions to foreign tourists in Bangkok, university lectures about film and media</td>
<td>Travel abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nam</td>
<td>University in Thailand, Holiday to Hong Kong</td>
<td>At work with clients from the United States and colleagues from Vietnam, chatting/texting with Thai friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fai</td>
<td>Primary School and High School in Thailand</td>
<td>University English class, University textbooks and exams about Engineering, giving directions to foreign tourists in Bangkok</td>
<td>Job, travel abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod</td>
<td></td>
<td>With British boyfriend and other friends in Thailand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fon</td>
<td>Primary School and High School in Thailand</td>
<td>University textbooks about Computer Science, University English class, with exchange students,</td>
<td>Travel to England, Australia, USA; international business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wan</td>
<td>High school and University entrance classes in Thailand; English movies; Study abroad in New Jersey, USA</td>
<td>University textbooks about Engineering, Giving directions to foreign tourists in Bangkok, English movies.</td>
<td>Job, travel and work abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Past use of English</td>
<td>Current use of English</td>
<td>Future use of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chompoo</td>
<td>University in Thailand</td>
<td>Working at a Japanese company in Bangkok, with Japanese bosses, with clients</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fah</td>
<td>Working at an English language Media company in Bangkok, with customers from the USA and India, giving directions to foreign tourists in Bangkok</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boy</td>
<td>Primary School and High School in Thailand, Universities in Thailand – bachelor degree and master degree, regional sales for a multinational company working with colleagues and clients in Singapore and Malaysia</td>
<td>Daily life – billboards, movies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ning</td>
<td>Travel to Bali, with European Hotel Manager University English class, University textbooks about Accounting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bomb</td>
<td>High school in Thailand, with a German relative who came to visit Thailand Giving directions to foreign tourists in Bangkok</td>
<td>Job, travel to Malaysia or Singapore</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nong</td>
<td>Private English language school in Bangkok</td>
<td>Job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Past use of English</td>
<td>Current use of English</td>
<td>Future use of English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nui</td>
<td></td>
<td>University classes</td>
<td>Work as a Flight</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>about Airline Business</td>
<td>attendant, work and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>travel in another</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>city/country e.g. Paris.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Study abroad in</td>
<td>Chatting and speaking</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>England</td>
<td>with foreign friends</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>from England and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>China, Chatting with</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Thai friends, English</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>language movies,</td>
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<td>University English</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>class, sisters who</td>
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<td>studied in India</td>
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<tr>
<td>Palm</td>
<td>High School in</td>
<td>University lectures</td>
<td>Job in an international</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>about Pharmacy,</td>
<td>or regional company</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Helping foreign</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tourists in Bangkok</td>
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</tbody>
</table>