DOCTORAL (PHD) DISSERTATION

Árpád Farkas

The Pragmatics of English as a Lingua Franca in
an International University Context:
An Exploratory Study of Language Use From
Multiple Perspectives

2024

PhD Programme in Language Pedagogy

Doctoral School of Education

Faculty of Education and Psychology

Eötvös Loránd University

Head of Doctoral School: Prof. Dr. Anikó Zsolnai DSc

Head of Doctoral Programme: Prof. Dr. Krisztina Károly DSc

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

ÁRPÁD FARKAS

THE PRAGMATICS OF ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA IN AN INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY CONTEXT: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF LANGUAGE USE FROM MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

DOI: 10.15476/ELTE.2024.262

Supervisor: Dr Éva Illés PhD habil

Budapest, 2024

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor Éva Illés, who has helped me in more ways than I can list. Apart from providing me with guidance throughout this research project, she had initiated me into the world of pragmatics several years earlier and has continued to give me food for thought ever since. By maintaining exceptionally high academic standards, she has set an example I can only hope to emulate.

I also thank Kata Csizér, from whom I have learnt most of what I know about empirical research.

I am grateful to Andrea Reményi and Nóra Wünsch-Nagy for reviewing my thesis and making useful suggestions for improvement.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Krisztina Károly and Dorottya Holló, who—as Programme Director and Director of Studies respectively—were always ready to help me navigate through the morass of PhD regulations and red tape.

I am deeply indebted to Anna Szegedy-Maszák, who came to my aid when I needed assistance with a vitally important aspect of my research.

I wish to thank Jasmina Sazdovska for the help with which she has provided me and for her convivial collegiality.

I greatly appreciate the advice and support I received from Ágnes Albert.

I am also much obliged to Péter Medgyes for his kind words of encouragement.

I am enormously grateful to the participants, who not only allowed me to observe their interactions but also gave their time graciously to participate in follow-up interviews. It goes without saying that I could not have possibly carried out the research without their help.

Most importantly, I thank my mother for everything. Without her, I would have achieved nothing.

Abstract

The use of English for international communication in diverse contexts has made the language the most important lingua franca in the world. Thus, understanding how English is used in educational settings is among the targets of English as a lingua franca (ELF) research. However, most empirical studies on ELF communication have focused on lexicogrammar or on pragmatic strategies and tended to emphasise researchers' interpretations of language data whilst paying less attention to the perspectives of language users. Therefore, the aim of the present thesis is to provide rectification by analysing ELF communication from the perspectives of ELF language users in addition to that of the researcher. To achieve this end, an exploratory study was carried out in an international university context in Hungary. The participants were 10 postgraduate students from diverse first-language backgrounds, and their interactions in seminar discussions constituted the object of enquiry. Qualitative data of two types were collected to facilitate the exploration of different perspectives: interactional data and emic data. The interactional data consisted of video recordings of seminar discussions, whereas the emic data were obtained by means of stimulated recall (i.e., the participants watched the recordings of their interactions and commented on them). The stimulated-recall data were used in the analysis of the interactional data, allowing the researcher to probe into the students' perspectives during the interactions. The data were analysed both extensively and intensively. The extensive analysis resulted in the creation of a taxonomy of the features of the interactional data, categorised into four main groups (i.e., language production, the interpersonal metafunction of language, the ideational metafunction of language, and discourse related to the channel of communication). The intensive analyses, which permitted the exploration of the participants' emic perspectives, were performed on six speech events. The results indicate that the analyst's foci were concentrated mainly on aspects of language production and on other features of language use that were readily recognisable from the perspective of an outside observer. By contrast, the participants' views on the relevant features of language use in the same settings were influenced by their particular schematic knowledge. The findings of the study suggest that it is worth incorporating emic views into the analysis of interactional data because the relevant features of language use are likely to remain elusive without the exploration of the perspectives of language users.

Keywords: pragmatics, English as a lingua franca, classroom interaction, emic data, stimulated recall

Table of Contents

"The truth is rarely pure and never simple" (Oscar Wilde).

1 Introduction

The English language had become the de facto medium of international interactions by the 21st century (Crystal, 2003), making it play a potentially more important role in global communication than any other language. The exact number of English speakers is undetermined owing partly to the fact that it is difficult to establish what constitutes sufficient proficiency in the language for speakership; nevertheless, it has been suggested that the number of speakers worldwide—including those who speak English as an additional language—could be as high as 2 billion (Graddol, 2006). The diversity of the speakers makes English a pluricentric language, which Kachru (1996) described "with reference to the Three Concentric Circles of English" (p. 137). In this model, users of English are divided into the triad of the Inner Circle, which includes speakers from countries where English is spoken by the majority as a first language; the Outer Circle, which is comprised of countries where English may be an official language alongside other local languages; and the Expanding Circle, which encompasses the rest of the world. It should be noted that speakers in the Inner Circle form a minority of all English speakers as "the vast majority of verbal exchanges in English do not involve any native speakers of the language at all" (Seidlhofer, 2005, p. 339), which is to say that nonnative speakers of English use the language as a means of communication to interact predominantly with other nonnative speakers. The use of English for this type of international communication has come to be known as English as a lingua franca (henceforth ELF).

An important question that researchers contributing to the initial wave of ELF research attempted to answer concerned the status of ELF as a linguistic phenomenon, that is, whether English (or, more accurately, Englishes) used by speakers from diverse first-language backgrounds for international communication could potentially be considered a variety of its own (Firth, 1996; Jenkins, 2000; Modiano, 2003; Mollin, 2006; Murray, 2003; Seidlhofer, 2001; Widdowson, 1997). The issue of dialectal differentiation is not unique to ELF as it appears to have surfaced whenever English had been taken up and used by speakers in new contexts. As Kachru (1996) pointed out, "processes of liberation … from the traditional canons associated with English" (p. 137) were needed before the Englishes spoken in the Outer Circle gained acceptance, and it was through codification (i.e., the systematic description of the language) that liberation was achieved. In a similar vein, the recognition of postcolonial varieties of English in what today is the Inner Circle once depended on their codification, which was necessary for

speakers to feel a sense of ownership of those varieties. To illustrate the process in the case of American English, Murphy (2018, p. 269) used a literary example by quoting Twain (1897), who—in Victorian times—wrote the following: "There is no such thing as 'the Queen's English.' The property has gone into the hands of a joint stock company and we own the bulk of the shares!" (p. 230). These words are echoed in contemporary views concerning the ownership of English (Widdowson, 1994), namely that English belongs to all speakers who use it and that the majority of speakers, who use English as a lingua franca, need not (and do not) conform to Inner Circle norms (Hülmbauer et al., 2008; Seidlhofer, 2005). Nevertheless, research endeavours aimed at the codification of ELF did not bear fruit. Despite the existence of findings such as Jenkins's (2000) description of phonological features of English used in ELF communication or Seidlhofer's (2004) and Pitzl et al.'s (2008) corpus-based identification of unique features of English lexicogrammar in ELF interactions, no consensus has been reached regarding the features of ELF at large. What researchers have described is the use of English in specific contexts of communication rather than ELF as a variety. Thus, ELF is not a language variety but a type of language use. As a result of this realisation, the focus of ELF research has shifted towards the realm of pragmatics (e.g., Cogo, 2009; House, 2010; Walkinshaw, 2022).

If it is a specific type of language use which gives rise to ELF, then the phenomenon can be researched by investigating language use in the various settings in which English is the medium of international communication. Out of the numerous contexts where ELF is used, the domain of higher education stands out as a particularly prominent one given that the globalisation of higher education has been attributed principally to English, which often acts as the medium through which education is delivered (Graddol, 2006). Universities have seen a steady rise in the number of international students in their student bodies over the past few decades, with statistics indicating that by 2021 the number of inbound international students had exceeded 6 million worldwide, and 37,925 of them were studying in Hungary in the same year (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, n.d.). According to Szabó (2018), universities in the European Union have adopted internationalisation as a strategic goal, and student mobility is possible due largely to the use of English by academic staff and students alike. In these international contexts of education, it is not uncommon for English to be used for academic purposes exclusively by speakers from the Expanding Circle and in ways that may differ from established convention (Mauranen & Ranta, 2008; Pölzl & Seidlhofer, 2006).

Accordingly, the use of ELF in educational contexts has generated substantial research interest (e.g., Björkman, 2012; Gotti, 2014; Hahl, 2016; Knapp, 2011; Mauranen, 2010a; Riekkinen, 2010; Smit, 2010; Wang, 2021). ELF communication has been found to be highly efficient despite the fact that it takes place without strict adherence to the norms that may be followed by native English speakers (Seidlhofer, 2009). In fact, the linguistic and cultural diversity that characterises ELF communication is considered to be an asset rather than an impediment to meeting the communicative needs of speakers engaged in ELF interactions (Murray, 2012). Participants in academic ELF interactions have been shown to draw on their linguistic and multilingual resources in adaptive ways in order to make themselves understood (e.g., Cogo, 2009; Gotti, 2014; Kaur, 2022). Another noteworthy feature of language use observed in ELF communication is a type of linguistic collaboration whereby speakers engaged in ELF interactions "jointly develop a shared repertoire to suit their specific purposes on that specific occasion" (Jenkins, 2012, p. 491). It has also been demonstrated that interactants in ELF discourse tend to make use of a range of pragmatic strategies for communicative effectiveness and do so on their own terms, often drawing on their first-language backgrounds and schematic knowledge (Cogo, 2010; Kaur, 2009; Pölzl & Seidlhofer, 2006). What these studies and a multitude of others have shown is that ELF communication is seldom hindered by misinterpretations or communication breakdowns, but when misunderstandings do occur, interlocutors tend to negotiate meaning jointly and establish what they mean by what they say. In other words, speakers in ELF contexts are able to use English resourcefully and successfully for communication in spite of having little shared knowledge due to their diverse linguacultural backgrounds.

As a consequence, the processes that underlie successful ELF communication are of interest to researchers working in the fields of both language pedagogy and applied linguistics. As Mauranen et al. (2010) put it, "for applied pedagogical interests, it is a top priority to analyse successful language use" (p. 184). As such, researchers who set out to analyse language use (i.e., not merely usage) can be expected to attain a degree of understanding of why speakers use language in ways they do. The achievement of such an objective arguably requires the exploration of language users' perspectives on interactional phenomena in addition to that of the analyst because the thought processes that influence language use will remain inaccessible to outside observers without input from speakers. Despite the need for participants' perspectives to

be taken into consideration in the analysis of language use, most studies on ELF interactions seem to have focused on the surface level of communication, thereby making the analyst's perspective prevail. Some research has been undertaken to address this issue; for example, Smit (2010) conducted a longitudinal study of ELF classroom discourse in which insight into students' perspectives was sought through prolonged engagement with the participants. Another example is Kalocsai's (2014) investigation, in which the researcher became a participant observer in a community of international students in order to acquaint herself with the linguistic and social practices of the group. Nonetheless, familiarity with the modus operandi of individuals does not appear to be a sufficient basis for analysts to account for choices that speakers make in specific instances of language use. As Illés (2020) argued, researchers need "to capture participants' reality using ethnography" (p. 9) to understand language use in context, but this cannot be fully achieved through observation alone. Hence, the use of additional means of enquiry is necessary for language use to be analysed in a way that reflects language users' experience. This view seems to be shared by Pitzl (2022), who called for the adoption of novel research methods to describe ELF interactions from the participants' perspectives. In sum, the paucity of studies in which language use is analysed from speakers' frames of reference has carved a niche for research to be conducted with a view to exploring ELF communication from the perspectives of those who engage in it.

Therefore, the main aim of the present thesis is to fill the existing research gap by exploring language use in an academic ELF setting from multiple perspectives. Specifically, the objective of the study is to concentrate on language users' perspectives in the process of communication as much as on the researcher's analytical perspective. The research foci, thus, are threefold: The exploration of pragmatic phenomena in the academic ELF context under analysis begins by providing a description of the features of interaction and language use that appear salient from the researcher's perspective. Thereafter, the focus of the analysis shifts from the analyst's to the participants' perspectives, thereby complementing the researcher's examination of the data with views on the same phenomena voiced by the students who produced the language data. The participants' perspectives are penetrated by means of stimulated recall, for the use of which the rationale is discussed in detail in a subsequent chapter. The intention behind the combination of the different analytical methods is to allow insights that would be concealed from outside observers without the participants' input to emerge from the data. The third and

ultimate goal of the analysis, then, is to juxtapose the participating students' perspectives with that of the researcher and to outline the implications that the differences between them may have for applied linguistic research on ELF and for language pedagogy more generally.

It is anticipated that this exploratory enquiry into language use will contribute to research findings on the pragmatics of ELF in five main ways. The first and most apparent outcome of the investigation are the insights which the analyses offer into instances of ELF interaction in an international university context. As mentioned above, the augmentation of the researcher's analysis with direct input from the participants enables the analyst to draw conclusions that could otherwise not materialise. A secondary—albeit not less important—contribution of the thorough understanding of pragmatic phenomena is that it constitutes a stepping stone towards capturing the complexity of communication by empirical means. By illustrating the multiplicity of participant relevance, the findings demonstrate that ELF communication is more complex and less orderly than it may appear on the surface. The third and fourth ways in which this study furthers the profession's understanding of language use in ELF interactions are opposite sides of the same coin, inasmuch as they relate to the novelty of the results vis-à-vis existing research findings. On the one hand, some aspects of language use in the context which was analysed in this investigation bear similarity to interaction in other settings of ELF communication, thereby corroborating what was found in previous research. On the other hand, the focus on participant relevance in the present research brings unexpected elements of context to the fore, which allows hitherto unknown findings to emerge. The fifth and final contribution of this thesis is one made towards the development of research methodology: The use of the stimulated recall technique in the analysis of interactional data is shown to be suitable for exploring participants' perspectives in the process of communication.

In terms of its structural organisation, the thesis can be divided into five chapters altogether. Following this short introductory chapter, the theoretical background of the study is presented in the second chapter. First, definitions of key terms are provided, which is followed by a discussion of the theories of language use that formed the basis of the empirical analysis. In the final section of the theoretical background, results of empirical investigations of language use in ELF contexts are reviewed. The third chapter begins with the provision of the rationale for the research design, and the rest of it is devoted to the description of the methodology employed in the present research endeavour, including the data collection and data analysis procedures as well

as the ethical considerations. The fourth chapter of the thesis is by far the most extensive as it presents the findings of the empirical investigation and consists of seven main parts, each of which is divided into several subsections. In the first part of the chapter, an overview of the features of language use in the context of communication under analysis is presented. This initial analysis represents the researcher's view of the data and concentrates both on usage and on other aspects of language use such as interaction. Afterwards, the results of six separate but related analyses of speech events are presented. Every conversation is first analysed from the researcher's perspective, and then the participants' perspectives are explored through stimulated recall. Each speech event analysis concludes with a summary of the differences between the various perspectives. The thesis draws to a close in the fifth chapter, wherein the main findings are summarised, and the research questions are answered. As part of the concluding remarks, the limitations of the findings obtained in this empirical enquiry are also considered, and suggestions are made for future research on ELF pragmatics.

2 Theoretical Background

The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise the empirical investigation undertaken in the present thesis by providing an overview of the theoretical considerations that are relevant to the study. To this end, the description of the theoretical background is divided into three main sections. First, the definitions of the key terms are presented. Thereafter, the theories of language use that informed the analysis of the empirical data are discussed. Finally, some important results of empirical research on the use of English as a lingua franca are reviewed.

2.1 Definitions of Key Terms

2.1.1 *Pragmatics*

Considered in a general sense, pragmatics is "the study of the use of language in communication, particularly the relationships between sentences and the contexts and situations in which they are used" (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 449). Because the way in which language is used is central to pragmatics, research has to account for how speakers make use of language in particular contexts of communication. It is the requirement for the communicative intentions of language users to be taken into consideration that principally distinguishes pragmatics from semantics, with which it is often contrasted (e.g., Davis, 1987; Gendler Szabó, 2005; Gillon, 2008). Fundamentally, both branches of linguistic enquiry are concerned with meaning, but the focus of semantics is "how words literally connect to things, or more generally, the investigation of meaning as encoded in language" (Yule, 1996, p. 134), whereas pragmatics is "the study of speaker meaning as distinct from word or sentence meaning" (Yule, 1996, p. 133). Thus, pragmatics and semantics examine different facets of meaning, with the concentration of semantics being on meaning in a general sense (i.e., conventional meaning) and that of pragmatics being on meaning in a specific sense (i.e., contextual meaning). The difference can be illustrated through the comparison of dictionary meaning and speaker meaning in a conversation. For example, the polysemous noun "coach" may mean a vehicle or a person. From the perspective of semantics, the word has the potential to express either meaning in equal measure. From a pragmatic perspective, however, the noun expresses neither unless it is used in a particular context that endows the lexical item with meaning. What is more, speakers may even eschew the observance of convention and use language to communicate meaning that is semantically not recognised (e.g., when making ironic remarks). Pragmatics, then, focuses on how meaning is realised in the course of using language; in other words, it is the study of "what

speakers intend to do with their words and what it is which makes this intention clear" (Cook, 2003, p. 51). It follows from the definition that research with a focus on pragmatics must involve the imposition of interpretations upon utterances. An additional consequence of the interpretive orientation of pragmatics is a need for language users' perspectives to be explored: It is, after all, through insight into speakers' thought processes that intended meaning in particular speech situations can best be studied.

2.1.2 *Lingua Francas*

Although English is the most widely used lingua franca in the 21st century (British Council, 2013), it should be noted that being a lingua franca is not exclusively the prerogative of the English language. The term "lingua franca" derives from the Arabic "lisan-al-farang," which was used to mean "an intermediary language used by speakers of Arabic with travellers from Western Europe" (House, 2003, p. 557). English seems to have borrowed the term "lingua franca" in the 17th century from Italian, in which the phrase means Frankish tongue (Collins, n.d.). In a general sense, a lingua franca is understood as "a language used for communication between people speaking a variety of languages" (Cook, 2003, p. 129). Therefore, any language that constitutes a means of communication between speakers who come from different first-language backgrounds can be referred to as a lingua franca.

Historically, Latin was used as an international lingua franca in medicine and in education, among other domains. Nowadays, French continues to be used as a lingua franca in, for instance, those parts of Africa where it was once introduced as the language of the colonisers, though some (e.g., Chaudenson, 2003) believe this state of affairs may not continue indefinitely without language policy interventions. Another example is the Russian language, which is used widely "as a lingua franca in the territory of the former Soviet Union" (Pavlenko, 2006, p. 78). In addition to natural languages, constructed ones such as Esperanto can also serve a lingua-franca function; nevertheless, artificial lingua francas have thus far failed to supersede their natural counterparts due presumably in part to their smaller bases of speakers. Thus, what the multiplicity of lingua francas illustrates is that the status of a language as a lingua franca is independent of all linguistic properties of the language and is attributable only to the intermediary communicative function which the language may perform. This, then, means that the study of lingua francas can be pursued along pragmatic lines of enquiry as it is a particular type of language use that gives rise to lingua franca communication.

2.1.3 *English as a Lingua Franca*

Similarly to most naturally occurring phenomena, English as a lingua franca (ELF) predates its descriptor, that is to say, English had been used as a lingua franca long before it was first labelled as such. ELF made its initial appearances in the applied linguistics literature in the 1990s, though Jenkins (2014) mentioned that the lingua franca use of English had been theorised about as early as in the 1980s. One of the early and influential definitions was put forward by Firth (1996), who defined ELF as "a 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen *foreign* language of communication" (p. 240). Firth's definition, which was formulated at a time when empirical research had not yet shown that ELF is not a variety of English, had two implications for ELF. The first inference that can be made is that Firth conceptualised ELF as a language variety because he defined it as a "contact language" (p. 240). For researchers, this view of ELF would imply that the description of the phenomenon can best be carried out in descriptive linguistic rather than in pragmatic terms. This is, indeed, what Jenkins (2000) did when she attempted to describe ELF by identifying the core features of its phonology (i.e., as if it were a variety). The second implication that derives from the definition is that ELF can facilitate communication only among speakers for whom English is not a first language given that ELF, according to Firth, is a "*foreign* language" (p. 240). In other words, ELF interactions were seen by Firth as acts of communication from which native English speakers are excluded.

Neither of these statements about ELF appears to have stood the test of time as more recent findings of ELF research have yielded more inclusive definitions. Seidlhofer (2005) defined ELF simply and broadly "as a way of referring to communication in English between speakers with different first languages" (p. 339). Seidlhofer's definition of ELF is similar to that of a lingua franca by Cook (2003), but it differs from Cook's and Firth's (1996) definitions in that it describes ELF as communication which happens to be conducted in English rather than as a language or a language variety. This is an important distinction because if ELF were considered to be a variety of English, it would need to be codified in the same way as varieties normally are (Haugen, 1966), and researchers of ELF, much like sociolinguists (Wardhaugh, 2006), would be expected to find some degree of cohesive homogeneity among all the variation produced in the course of ELF interactions. This is not the case as the "multiplicity of voices" is "a major characteristic of English as a lingua franca" (House, 2010, p. 365). The notion that ELF

may in any way be considered a variety of English was also dismissed by Widdowson (2015), who pointed out that "variability" of language in ELF research is seen "not in terms of variety at all but as the variable use of English as *inter*-community communication, as communication *across* communities" (p. 362). What is also noteworthy in Seidlhofer's definition is that it allows the participation of a wider range of English speakers in ELF interactions as it does not explicitly exclude native speakers of English.

In addition to being a type of communication, ELF can also be viewed as a particular context in which communication takes place. This was suggested by Jenkins (2009), in whose conception ELF is "a specific communication context: English being used as a lingua franca, the common language of choice, among speakers who come from different linguacultural backgrounds" (p. 200). The focus in this definition is on language use and on the context in which it occurs. If ELF is to be understood as a context of communication as Jenkins suggested, it then can be studied with a focus on context, and this means that ELF research is necessarily a form of pragmatic enquiry. Although Jenkins left the status of participants in ELF communication as native or nonnative speakers of English unspecified, she made it clear that the need for interactants in ELF contexts to engage in communication specifically through the medium of English exists because of the linguistic and cultural (or as Jenkins put it: linguacultural) differences between them that make English the common denominator. This implies that participants involved in ELF communication speak different first languages, but no mention is made of the resources at the participants' disposal in languages other than English.

It is this conceptual oversight (i.e., the lack of regard for the breadth of linguistic resources on which language users can potentially draw) that ELF definitions proposed more recently have attempted to remedy. Conceptualisations of ELF put forward in the past decade or so have been based on the realisation that speakers engaged in ELF communication tend to be multilingual. For instance, Mortensen (2013) defined ELF in a somewhat circular fashion by proclaiming it to be "*the use of English in a lingua franca language scenario*" but added that the context of use (i.e., the scenario) ought "to be understood as the linguistic resources available in a given communicative encounter between two or more speakers by virtue of their individual language repertoires" (p. 36). Mortensen's description of the lingua franca use of English resembles other definitions in that ELF is conceptualised as a type of communication context or scenario, but it clearly underscores the importance of speakers' language skills not only in

English but also in other languages. Although Mortensen did not specifically include multilingualism in the definition, the reference to speakers' language repertoires indicates firstly that ELF encounters are multilingual in that the linguistic resources available to the participants are not restricted to English and secondly that speakers in contexts of ELF communication may make use of the full extent of their linguistic resources. As such, multilingualism is considered to be an integral aspect of ELF communication by Seidlhofer (2015), who argued that ELF can be seen as a manifestation of multilingualism. In a similar vein, Jenkins (2015) drew attention to the fact that the majority of interactants in ELF communication are, by definition, multilingual and stated that "research should start from this premise" (p. 63). Thus, it was suggested that ELF could be conceived of as "multilingual communication in which English is available as a contact language of choice, but is not necessarily chosen" (Jenkins, 2015, p. 73). The definitions suggested by Mortensen and by Jenkins seem to have moved away from the variety view of ELF; instead, the focus has shifted towards the pragmatics of interaction, making the communicative function of English central to the notion of ELF. At the same time, these definitions both place emphasis on the linguistic resources of speakers who engage in ELF communication, suggesting that ELF should be seen as a multilingual context of communication in which English is likely to be used by all.

Even though the overview of ELF definitions presented herein is not intended to be exhaustive, it has highlighted some of the defining characteristics of ELF conceptualised in the relevant research literature. The differences between the various conceptualisations of ELF discussed in this section are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Attributes of ELF Specified in Various Definitions

Attributes	Definitions				
	Firth (1996)	Seidlhofer (2005)	Jenkins (2009)	Mortensen (2013)	Jenkins (2015)
a communication context	no	no	yes	yes	no
a contact language	yes	no	no	no	no
an additional language	yes	no	no	no	no
English is a language of choice	yes	no	yes	no	yes
multilingual speakers	no	no	no	yes	yes
speakers with different first languages	yes	yes	yes	no	no

One of the conclusions that can be drawn from the definitions above is that English as a lingua franca is similar to other lingua francas in that it is not a type of language (i.e., not a variety of the English language), but it is a type of language use. This, as mentioned previously, makes ELF a suitable object of pragmatic enquiry given that it is language use which constitutes the analytical focus of pragmatics. Another observation to which the definitions give rise concerns the first-language backgrounds of speakers in ELF contexts. Although English tends not to be the first language of those who use it for ELF communication, most of the definitions presented above indicate that it is not an obligatory requirement for all interactants in ELF exchanges to speak English as an additional language. An important implication of this is that native speakers of English are not excluded from ELF. It is, however, a prerequisite for (at least some) speakers to have different first languages; a context of communication cannot otherwise be labelled as an English as a lingua franca situation. Although reference to speakers' different first languages is not explicitly included in every definition (i.e., Jenkins, 2015; Mortensen, 2013), the fact that speakers in ELF contexts do not all share a first language is the only logical explanation for why such a context of communication arises in the first place: If all interactants were speakers of the same first language, their exchange would not be called English as a lingua franca. Despite the different first languages spoken by participants in ELF interaction, English is not necessarily the only means of communication available to participants in ELF conversations. The inherent multilingualism underlying ELF communication allows for the possibility that more than one language may be shared by those who engage in interaction through ELF, though speakers' heterogeneous language backgrounds are likely to mean that not all linguistic resources (NB. including English) will be shared by all to the same extent. Based on the ELF definitions reviewed in this section, then, ELF will be understood in the context of the present study as the use of English for international communication by speakers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

2.1.4 *Multiple Perspectives*

As the present thesis reports on the findings of a study in which an attempt was made to analyse ELF communication from multiple perspectives, some explanation of what is meant by the different perspectives is required. In qualitative research, the need for the interpretation of data means that researchers' perceptions are bound to feature prominently in the data analysis, and it is the potential for bias in the process which can be countered by seeking to understand the

perspectives of research participants. In ethnographic studies, and in qualitative research more generally, the terms "etic" and "emic" are used to refer to the different perspectives of researchers and participants (Mostowlansky & Rota, 2020).

According to Markee (2013), the necessity to distinguish between emic and etic perspectives arose in linguistic research in the 1960s, and the terms themselves were derived from the terminology used in the study of sounds: "As originally formulated, phon*emic* accounts are *member-relevant* rules about the sound contrasts of language that native speakers have inside their heads, while phon*etic* accounts are *researcher-relevant* distinctions about how these sounds are observably realized by native speakers" (Markee, 2013, p. 1). The adjectives, which have since been adopted more widely by scholars in the social sciences, have almost completely lost their connotations of linguistics; nevertheless, the basic aspect of their original meaning (i.e., researcher relevance vs. participant relevance) has been retained. A contemporary interpretation of the difference between the terms, put simply, is that "an *emic perspective* is an insider's view of a particular culture or community" (McKay, 2006, p. 78), which is "in contrast to an *etic perspective* in which researchers interpret what they see largely from their own perspective" (McKay, 2006, p. 78). In applied linguistics, emic and etic views tend to be utilised more narrowly; instead of understanding entire cultures, the objective of ethnographic research is likely to be something more specific such as "understanding language learning and language use in and beyond the classroom" (Wei, 2020, p. 159). In this study, it is the latter (i.e., language use in the classroom) which was probed into, and the investigation, whose methodology is discussed in more detail below, was carried out with a focus on both perspectives. Thus, the multiple perspectives featured in the title of the thesis are to be understood as referring to the researcher's etic viewpoint as well as to the participants' emic perspectives.

2.2 Theoretical Conceptualisations of Language Use

The theories introduced in this section constitute the backbone of the study in the sense that they served as the theoretical basis for the data analysis. Although the theories present abstractions of various phenomena ranging from individual (e.g., speakers' background knowledge) to interpersonal (e.g., politeness) aspects of communication, a common thread that runs through them is that they are all pragmatic theories, inasmuch as they describe language use in context. The abstract models of language use formulated by theoreticians can be used to describe and understand communication in a given context irrespective of whether that is a first-

language or a lingua-franca environment; thus, they are universally applicable. Nevertheless, the pertinence of the theories to this investigation derives from the fact that ELF is defined in pragmatic terms (i.e., as language use in a specific type of communication context); therefore, it can be understood through theories that expound upon the principles of language use in context.

2.2.1 *Speech Act Theory*

An influential theory intended to account for how speakers use language to achieve their communicative goals was put forward by Austin, who presented his ideas in the form of lectures. The starting point of Austin's (1962) theory was the realisation that language can be used to bring about change, which is apparent when ordinary statements are compared to what Austin called performative sentences. Although the distinction between the two is not always straightforward, Austin pointed out that performative sentences differ from statements in that they lack the capacity for being true or false. Because performatives have no truth value, it would be unusual for someone to say, "my neighbour said hello to me, but I think he was lying". After all, if someone says "hello" to another person, the act of greeting has been performed. In this regard, performative sentences are clearly different from statements (e.g., "hello" vs. "I said hello to you yesterday"). Other examples of performing actions by linguistic means given by Austin include the christening of a ship or entry into matrimony. What gives rise to these actions is that specific words are uttered in particular contexts. Austin referred to these actions as speech acts, and he proposed a three-component model to explain how speech acts operate in conversation. In Austin's view, a speech act consists of a locutionary act, an illocutionary act, and a perlocutionary act. Of these, the locutionary act (often shortened to locution) is the utterance a speaker makes. For instance, a speaker who is desirous of tea may produce a locution such as: "I fancy a cuppa". In saying the sentence, the hypothetical speaker's intention may be to persuade their interlocutor to make them a cup of tea, which is the illocutionary act (also known as the illocutionary force). The perlocutionary act (or effect) is the consequence engendered by the utterance: If the hearer believes that the sentence was intended as a request for tea, they might proceed to put the kettle on.

Despite Austin's delineation of the seemingly uncomplicated triad of which a speech act is comprised, the application of Speech Act Theory is not without potential problems. The explanation of how speech acts work is not equivalent to a definition of what a speech act exactly is (and what it is not) given that the notion of doing things with words (Austin, 1962) is

rooted in the distinction between descriptive statements and performative sentences. However, whether an utterance is performative or not depends largely upon the hearer's interpretation of the illocutionary force: A given perlocutionary effect can be achieved through different locutions (e.g., the same request can be made directly or indirectly). This has led Flowerdew (1990) to conclude that the application of Speech Act Theory is complicated by the fact that the number of speech acts is unknown; indeed, it seems plausible that the number is infinite because a list of language functions may potentially be expanded indefinitely, and the ways in which language can be used to express those functions are also multifarious. In search of a solution, Searle (1971) argued that if a person is to understand a message, they first and foremost "should regard it as having been produced by a being with certain intentions" (p. 40) as this is the only way for humans to derive meaning from a set of signs—spoken or written. Thus, the theoretical conundrum caused by the elusiveness of speech acts can be resolved by the equation of any form of linguistic communication with speech acts (Searle, 1971). In other words, any locution can be considered a speech act because the importance of speakers' intentions in communication is such that language use is essentially the expression of illocutionary acts (i.e., no utterance is devoid of intention).

However, such a conceptualisation of speech acts results in a move away from the focus on performatives, which lend themselves to analysis more easily owing to their explicitness, and it creates analytical difficulty by broadening—indeterminately—the scope of linguistic phenomena potentially of interest to the analyst. Besides feasibility issues that result from an all-encompassing view of speech acts, the theoretical inclusivity raises the practical question as to whether language users' perception of communication is in alignment with the notion that linguistic interaction is a succession of speech acts. In spite of the explanatory potential of Speech Act Theory, researchers attempting to apply it as the sole focus of analysis arguably risk losing sight of language users, who will not ordinarily conceive of their language use in terms of speech acts. Moreover, the analysis of speech acts, regardless of the method used for their identification, is likely to provide an inherently etic perspective on linguistic communication: Because the locution and the perlocutionary effect (e.g., a verbal reaction) are the only sources of data potentially available to the analyst, the illocutionary force is necessarily surmised through the interpretation of the researcher. In this respect, researchers are in a position similar to that of hearers, except for lack of involvement in the conversation (i.e., actual engagement vs. the

researcher's engagement for the purpose of analysis). Thus, external observers and passive participants (i.e., hearers) alike may be liable to misconstrue what speakers intend to achieve by what they say. Considering that the illocutionary force is at the core of speech acts (Searle, 1971), making discoveries about it may be regarded as an important objective for analysts. The analysis of speech acts, therefore, may require information in addition to what is at the outside observer's disposal. As such, it seems necessary to examine speech acts through the exploration of the emic perspectives of language users because only by uncovering the genuine communicative intentions behind utterances can researchers ascertain whether their interpretations are representative of participants' experiences. Thus, this is one of the main aims of the present research project.

2.2.2 *The Cooperative Principle*

Another theory that may be used to gain an understanding of language use in context is the Cooperative Principle, which was developed by Grice (1975) and is based on logical universals in linguistic interaction. The theory is of relevance to this study as the Cooperative Principle works well in the analysis of complex systems—which ELF is (Baird et al., 2014)— owing to the fact that it has "considerable explanatory power regarding the choices we make about what we say and how we say it" (Murray, 2012, p. 323). What cooperation refers to in the name of the theory is the participants' intention to engage in communication (Yule, 1996), which means that a conversational interaction is considered to be cooperative by default (i.e., even in the absence of collaboration or agreement) because speakers recognise "a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction" (Grice, 1975, p. 45) in speech events. On the face of it, the Cooperative Principle may be mistaken for a set of instructions, which is due to the fact that it was originally formulated in the imperative: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice, 1975, p. 45). What Grice meant, however, was not the mandatory observance of rules as he did not put forward rules (NB. neither did he refer to them as such). Instead, he provided guidelines for establishing the contextual norms of communication. Assuming that the norms are adhered to, utterances carry no additional meaning. In putting the theory forward, however, Grice attempted to account for conversational implicatures by detailing the four aspects that have a bearing on how utterances are formulated and interpreted. Grice called these maxims and identified four of them: "Quantity,

Quality, Relation, and Manner" (Grice, 1975, p. 45). As mentioned previously, the maxims are not rules that must be obeyed. Rather, what the maxims do is provide a description of how conversational interaction is conducted in ordinary circumstances. It is possible to diverge from this default position, which, then, gives rise to a conversational implicature.

In order to illustrate how speakers can beget conversational implicatures, it is worth considering what Grice meant by each of the maxims and what consequences may follow in the event of deviation from the maxims. The maxim of Quality, for example, is about the relative veracity of an utterance. The default expectation that participants of a conversation tend to have is that the statements which their interlocutors make will carry a positive truth value. The maxim of Quantity is about the degree of informativeness, that is to say, the amount of information that is supplied should be neither insufficient nor excessive. To demonstrate the point, Yule (1996) cited the example of a man who was bitten by a dog after having asked a woman believed to be the dog's owner whether her dog bit. She answered that her dog did not bite, but the dog in question turned out not to be hers. In this situation, the woman acted in accordance with the maxim of Quality (i.e., she gave a truthful answer), but she provided insufficient information, thereby violating the maxim of Quantity. The third maxim is that of Relation, and it is one that can be summarised concisely: "Be relevant" (Grice, 1975, p. 46). Grice pointed out that being relevant is not as straightforward as it may initially appear to be; however, being relevant is generally understood in terms of contributing to a conversation in a way that is "appropriate to immediate needs at each stage of the transaction" (Grice, 1975, p. 47) and the other interlocutor. For instance, if a dinner guest were asked whether they liked the dessert, the person would need to respond by saying something about the dessert. If, however, the guest decided to praise the soup instead of the dessert, they would not observe the maxim of Relation, and this may lead the host to the conclusion that the guest did not like the dessert. The fourth maxim, that of Manner, relates to the style in which an utterance is made; observance of this maxim involves producing utterances characterised by perspicuity. This maxim would be violated if a speaker's contribution to a conversation were obscure or ambiguous. For example, if a critic were to say that a singer "produced a series of sounds" (Grice, 1975, p. 55) instead of "sang a song", it might be assumed that the obscure manner in which the utterance was made is indicative of an implicature (i.e., criticism of a subpar performance).

Due to its versatile applicability, the Cooperative Principle appears suitable to serve a range of discourse analytical purposes and could therefore be used to analyse utterances made by participants in a conversation. It is to be noted that the strength of the theory lies in its comprehensive description of the considerations of all parties engaged in communication under default and unexpected circumstances alike. This enables analysts who apply the Cooperative Principle to their data to understand how conversational implicatures are made as well as to analyse communicative situations where there is no implicature. This was illustrated through the examples given. The intentional eschewal of one or more of the maxims (e.g., as done by the dinner guest in the example above) is likely to result in some type of conversational implicature. However, Grice's theory can also be used to examine instances of communication in which failure to observe the maxims is not apparently intentional (e.g., as in the case of the lady who said her dog did not bite): Although the lack of intentionality means that there are typically no conversational implicatures to analyse in these instances, the Cooperative Principle can nevertheless be used to understand the reason(s) for breakdowns in communication. Because the theory sheds light on "the general principles regarding the interpretative procedures that guide language users in *how* the relevant features of the situation can or should be selected" (Illés, 2020, p. 57), it offers an emic viewpoint on language use, making it a potent analytical tool in understanding participants' perspectives on communication. The use of this model, then, may allow outsiders (e.g., researchers) to obtain a good grasp of how interactants in ELF contexts understand one another and make themselves understood (i.e., an emic perspective).

2.2.3 *Politeness Theory*

Theoretical work has been undertaken also to conceptualise the ways in which linguistic interaction is influenced by the social relations between speakers. Specifically, the role that politeness plays in language use has been analysed vis-à-vis general principles that underlie interpersonal communication. The concept of "face", which is lexicalised due to its use in common parlance in expressions like "losing face" or "saving face", is central to the analysis of the consideration speakers show for one another in the course of interaction. Taken up and developed by Brown and Levinson (1987), face was defined as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (p. 61). In an attempt to specify further how the notion of face should be understood, Brown and Levinson suggested that it consisted of two constituents: positive face and negative face. In this dichotomy, negative face can be thought of as a speaker's

"need to be independent, not imposed on by others" (Yule, 1996, p. 131), whereas "positive face reflects every person's need that his/her self-image is appreciated and approved of" (Spencer-Oatey & Zegarac, 2010, p. 76). Thus, impoliteness can manifest itself as verbal action that puts either aspect of individuals' face in jeopardy. For instance, if a hearer were requested by a speaker to do something for the speaker (e.g., put the kettle on), the request would be seen as posing a threat to the hearer's negative face because it would be an imposition depriving the hearer of the liberty to do as they wish. If, on the other hand, the appearance or the character of a hearer were in some way disparaged, the criticism would imperil the hearer's positive face because negative comments made about the person would alter the default assumption that the hearer is valued and appreciated by their interlocutors. Furthermore, the different types of interactional impoliteness can also be combined, and both faces of a person can be put at risk by, for example, making an utterance comprised of a mixture of threat to the hearer's negative and positive face (e.g., a demand accompanied by an insult). Instances of such behaviour (i.e., verbal action that endangers another person's face) are known as face-threatening acts (FTAs, Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Politeness theory can be applied to interactional data through the analysis of how face-threatening acts are performed given that these acts constitute a departure from the default position, which is the assumption that speakers' face wants will be satisfied (Yule, 1996), that is, their self-image will be respected. In their conceptualisation of how FTAs may be performed, Brown and Levinson (1987) described what they called superstrategies, which essentially are the ways in which speakers can threaten one another's face. There are four strategies for doing an FTA, the first of which "involves doing it in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 69) such as by using the imperative mood (e.g., "give me tea"). This is known as a bald FTA performed on record and without redress. Such direct FTAs would typically occur either in contexts where the interlocutors have—perhaps implicitly—agreed that communicative efficiency is desirable or in situations when the power dynamics between interactants are such that the person performing the FTA has no fear of retribution (e.g., medieval monarchs would not have felt concerned by making face threats when ordering their servants to bring them a beverage). The other strategies employed for doing FTAs on record would incorporate some type of redress, by which Brown and Levinson (1987) meant "action that 'gives face' to the addressee" (p. 69). As such, redressive action can be directed

towards the recipient's positive face or negative face, thus creating two varieties of strategies for mitigating a face threat. These can be referred to as face saving acts. Although Yule (1996) noted that speaker strategies that cater for a hearer's positive face can be performed in numerous different ways, face saving acts of this type "will tend to show solidarity, emphasize that both speakers want the same thing, and that they have a common goal" (Yule, 1996, p. 62), whereas acts aimed at saving the hearer's negative face "will tend to show deference, emphasize the importance of the other's time or concerns, and even include an apology for the imposition or interruption" (Yule, 1996, p. 62). The fourth strategy for accomplishing an FTA is to do it off record, which entails putting it indirectly. For instance, a speaker may decide to say "I'm dying for a brew" instead of making a more direct demand for tea so as to afford the hearer some room for manoeuvre: As no explicit request is made, the hearer is at liberty to ignore the speaker's appeal whilst keeping their negative face intact, but the addressee can also choose to interpret the utterance as a request if they are inclined to oblige. The fifth and final option is not to do an FTA at all.

Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory offers broad applicability, which stems from the fact that it is based on what they believed to be universal features of politeness influencing linguistic exchanges; thus, the model can be put to use in the analysis of politeness in a wide range of communication contexts irrespective of the language in which a given interaction is conducted. The universal applicability was, indeed, emphasised by the originators, who pointed out that their theory is substantiated with English-language examples as well as with "close parallels drawn from Tamil and Tzeltal" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 94) and examples from various other languages whenever possible. Due to its potential pertinence to diverse speech situations, politeness theory has been utilised extensively in pragmatics as an analytical tool by researchers who investigated, for example, the use of Japanese honorifics (Fukada & Asato, 2004), verb forms used in business etiquette seminars (Dunn, 2011), manifestations of power in literary dialogues (Ermida, 2006), or the ways in which teachers can signal disagreement in the classroom (Lopez-Ozieblo, 2018). Nonetheless, some criticism has been levelled against the theory on the grounds that it fails to account for the "dynamic activity of the participants' evaluations and perceptions of politeness in specific contexts" (Al-Hindawi & Alkhazaali, 2016, p. 1541). This is partly because researchers' analyses of politeness represent a predominantly etic perspective (Gilks, 2010), which may not always map onto the emic experience of language

users. As a result, analyses based on researchers' application of politeness theory to interactional data can occupy the middle ground between etic and emic orientations: Although the theory allows for interactants' viewpoints to be derived from linguistic data (e.g., through the analysis of FTAs in context), this may, to some extent, reflect the analyst's expert opinion and thus fall short of capturing participants' personal perceptions of politeness in communication (i.e., their lived experience). Therefore, to neutralise the possible etic bias of analysis, it may be necessary for researchers to obtain emic data, which could be used in conjunction with politeness theory to develop a more accurate understanding of how speakers' concerns about politeness shape their language use.

2.2.4 *Metafunctions of Language*

Another model that places emphasis on understanding language in the context of social interaction is Halliday's theory, according to which it is through a social semiotic perspective that the relationship between language and meaning can be understood. Halliday (1978) posited that language can be conceptualised in terms of metafunctions, which are "areas of meaning potential which are inherently involved in all uses of language" (Halliday, 1978, p. 47). In other words, metafunctions are the types of meaning that are expressed whenever language is used. In Halliday's view, there are three metafunctions around which linguistic systems are structured: the ideational metafunction, the interpersonal metafunction, and the textual metafunction. One type of meaning that can be expressed linguistically corresponds to the ideational metafunction of language, which is related to language users' knowledge of the world and of particular situations in which communication takes place, that is to say, the ideational metafunction "is the content function of language, language as 'about something'" (Halliday, 1978, p. 112). In contrast to the ideational metafunction, the interpersonal metafunction "is the participatory function of language, language as doing something" (Halliday, 1978, p. 112), which is connected to speakers' roles (e.g., "questioner-respondent, informer-doubter", Halliday, 1978, p. 112) as well as to the ways in which speakers can enter into dialogue with one another. These two types of meaning can also be thought of as "language as reflection" and "language as action" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, pp. 29–30). By contrast, the textual metafunction of language is different from the first two in that "it is not a way of using language, but rather a resource for ensuring that what is said is relevant and relates to its context" (Halliday & Hasan, 1989, p. 45); thus, the textual metafunction can also be considered an enabling function of language (Halliday, 1978) as

it allows the other two functions to be expressed. To demonstrate how the three functions are encoded into language, Halliday (1978) gave the example of the linguistic unit of the clause, in which transitivity would be equal to the ideational metafunction, whereas modality and mood would represent the interpersonal metafunction; the presence of the textual metafunction would be observable through "a set of systems that have been referred to collectively as 'theme'" (p. 113), which is present in universally recognised sentence components such as subjects and predicates (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

It is possible to specify the types of meaning that language can express further by dividing one of the metafunctions into its two constituents: The ideational metafunction of language can be seen as being comprised of an experiential function and a logical component (Halliday, 1978, pp. 48–49). Of these, the experiential function is what can broadly be equated with the metafunction at large; the ideational aspect of the function (i.e., the content upon which reflection can be produced through language) is expressed through the experiential function. Unlike the other functions, the logical component "is expressed through recursive structures" (Halliday, 1978, p. 48), which include reported speech, coordination, or apposition. Halliday drew attention to the fact that the logical component differs from the experiential function in that it represents the structure of language, whereas the experiential function derives from external phenomena. Thus, Halliday's conception of the metafunctions that provide the structure of language can be summarised as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2

The Metafunctions of Language Based on Halliday (1978)

IDEATIONAL		INTERPERSONAL	TEXTUAL
experiential	logical		

Although the metafunctions describe the different types of meaning expressed via language, they do not serve as indicators of importance, which is to say that there is no single metafunction that can be considered the primary one in comparison to the rest. In fact, Halliday (1978) insisted "on the ideational and interpersonal having equal status" (p. 50), though he conceded that the textual metafunction was different from the other two. In essence, the theory is rooted in the contention that utterances and their metafunctions are inseparable because language always "has both an interpersonal and ideational component to it. It does something, and it is about something" (Halliday & Hasan, 1989, p. 45). In the light of this, Halliday and Hasan

(1989) outlined in four points what the metafunctions entail in terms of comprehension. The first point corresponds to the experiential function and necessitates that language users have an understanding of the processes which are being described through language. The second point, which derives from the logical component, requires language users to understand how the various elements of what is being described relate to one another in a text (i.e., spoken or written). Even though these are separate requirements, Halliday and Hasan referred to them as 1a and 1b given that they together comprise the ideational metafunction. The third point, which follows from the interpersonal metafunction, makes the recognition of the function of a given utterance necessary (e.g., what a speaker may want to achieve by producing a text or whether the text is a question or a statement). The fourth and final point relates to the textual metafunction and compels language users to "grasp the news value and topicality of the message, and the coherence between one part of the text and every other part" (Halliday & Hasan, 1989, p. 45). The authors argued that incomplete interpretation (i.e., failure to consider all the metafunctions) prevents the full comprehension of a text from being achieved, though it is questionable whether full comprehension can ever be realised.

2.2.5 *Context and Schemata*

A general and all-embracing question with which pragmaticians are confronted is how the context of communication affects language use. This, first, requires an understanding of what context is. Despite the need for clarity on how the context of language use is to be understood in pragmatics, the formulation of a comprehensive definition of context is not being attempted here as such an enterprise lies beyond the confines of the present study and would, in fact, be suitable for the topic of a thesis on its own (Illes, 2001). Besides, it is likely that there is no single definition which could objectively encapsulate the notion given that scholars investigating context are not in agreement on its precise delineation because "particular goals of different research agendas affect the way … authors perceive context" (Illés, 2020, p. 19). This may prompt one to venture the tautological remark that context depends on context. Nevertheless, context appears to be of paramount significance in a study of language use because language is understood in context. This point derives from the definition of pragmatics discussed above, but the same conclusion can also be reached intuitively if an example such as the following one is considered. If someone were to list the colours yellow, green, brown, blue, pink, and black out of context, a hearer may struggle to find meaning in them. It is conceivable that the hearer—

without context—would associate the lexical items with their basic semantic meaning, namely that they are all descriptors of different hues. If, however, the same colours were mentioned in the context of snooker, the words would all of a sudden acquire meaning from the context: The hearer would probably understand that the colours denote balls used in the cue sport. Thus, only in context can meaning in a pragmatic sense be understood.

It is clear from the example above that context is not independent of language users' knowledge. If someone is not familiar with the rules of snooker, they may fail to recognise the connection between the colours and the sport. In other words, interactants need to be in possession of particular types of knowledge if they are to understand each other. The background knowledge used in the meaning-making process is known as schema, and it "can be defined as a cognitive construct, a configuration of knowledge, which we project on to events so as to bring them into alignment with familiar patterns of experience and belief" (Widdowson, 2004, p. 43). The definition of schema suggests that an utterance cannot be interpreted in exactly the same way as it was intended because no two language users will have the same set of experiences and beliefs based on which to understand what is said. As a consequence, it may be necessary to analyse meaning in terms of speaker meaning and hearer meaning in all contexts of language use given that there is bound to be disparity between the two perspectives. As Widdowson (1979) put it, "communication can of its nature only be approximate" (p. 175). In spite of the approximate nature of communication, speakers manage in everyday interactions to understand one another, or—at the very least—they are under the impression that they do.

The question to which speakers' ability to communicate successfully despite their heterogeneous schemata gives rise is how they decide what is relevant in a given situation and what is not. On a personal level, there is a need for language users to reduce the number of schemata that may be of relevance as they would otherwise be unable to cope with the demands of communication and comprehension. From an interpersonal point of view, it seems necessary for interactants to interpret what is being said with reference to either the same schema or, more realistically, compatibly similar schemata. Ordinarily, both of these objectives are achieved as a natural byproduct of communication. Thus did Widdowson (2007) describe the process: "A first-person party (a speaker or writer, **P1**) produces a text, which keys the second-person party (listener or reader, **P2**) into a context assumed to be shared" (p. 22). This implies, first and foremost, that there must be a certain amount of shared knowledge between interactants for them

to be able to communicate. In other words, speaking the same language is not sufficient for two parties to understand one another, which becomes all too apparent when, for instance, technophobe grandparents listen to their grandchildren's guidance on how to operate the latest piece of technology: They may speak the same language, but what is said can sound impenetrable to the hearer if they do not share the necessary amount of background knowledge with the speaker. The second implication that speakers' assumptions about a shared context have for communication is that an utterance of a P1 party will be understood as it was intended only if the context is shared by P1 and P2 to the same extent. As suggested above, this is likely to mean that the interpretation of an utterance can only result in a partial recognition of the communicative intention behind it (i.e., speaker meaning vs. hearer meaning). Differences notwithstanding, the viewpoint of either party may be seen as equally legitimate as speakers will formulate their utterances and participate in a subsequent discussion based on their schemata, and hearers will interpret what is said based on theirs.

Given the highly personal and intangible nature of contextual understanding, it is questionable whether and to what extent external observers can gain access to the cognitive processes in which language users engage during communication. Although understanding the full complexity of the derivation of meaning from context may be out of reach for empirical researchers, insight into the process could be obtained by studying how speakers draw on their background knowledge whilst using language. However, analyses based on evidence that is available to observers of a conversation are unlikely to bring investigators closer to the achievement of this goal. Arguably, researchers' attempts at interpretation amount to no more than the introduction of an additional perspective on interactional phenomena (i.e., with the existing perspectives remaining uncharted). What makes the context of language use challenging to examine by empirical means is that in research "the analysts' perspective necessarily implies that it is the expert users who are in control of relevance and determine the relevant features of situation. Therefore, it is their schema – that is, their conception of context – that takes precedence" (Illés, 2020, p. 38). However, what is relevant to a researcher may not be relevant to the language users whose context of communication is under investigation. Thus, a change of perspective appears to be required in order to understand how context is experienced by those who participate in speech events. It is by no means counterintuitive but may still be worth stating that interactants' perspectives need to be explored if an emic understanding of their conceptions

of the context of communication is to be attained—which is one of the objectives of this investigation.

2.2.6 *Conversation Analytical Insights Into Communication*

Though not a theory as such, Conversation Analysis (CA) has contributed to the development of an abstract understanding of the general principles that underlie spoken communication. CA has its origins in sociology as it started out as research focused on how talk is structured in social interaction (e.g., Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). In the present day, CA is generally understood to involve "the systematic analysis of the talk produced in everyday situations of human interaction: talk-in-interaction" (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008, p. 11). The concept of the conversational turn, which can be described broadly as "the unit of conversational communication" (Levinson, 2016, p. 8), plays a crucial role in CA. Situating turns in the context of various social phenomena, Sacks et al. (1974) drew attention to the fact that turns can be considered a basic feature of social order in that they occur in all walks of life, including politics (e.g., when an office-bearer is succeeded by another), games (e.g., in the form of moves made by different players), commerce (e.g., customers queue to be served in succession), and in conversation, too. Thus, the tendency for conversations to be made up of turns alternating between speakers is consistent with patterns of human behaviour observed elsewhere.

It is through the study of these turns that conversation analysts have sought to understand how spoken interaction is structured. The way in which participants in a conversation alternate between speaking and allowing others to speak is known as turn-taking. Using a metaphor based on business transactions to describe turn-taking, Yule (1996) suggested that the right for speakers to hold the floor is a "scarce commodity" (p. 72) in the economy of interaction; therefore, speakers use what Yule referred to as a local management system to determine who speaks when; consequently, conversational turns are not randomly ordered, but they are governed by implicit rules recognised by interlocutors who engage in dialogue with each another. Similar views were expressed by Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008), who pointed out that conversations do not merely consist of a random series of turns, but "they are sequentially ordered, which is to say that there are describable ways in which turns are linked together into definite sequences" (p. 41). A particular type of sequence in which conversational turns can follow one another is referred to as an adjacency pair, which is comprised of two "utterances produced by two

successive speakers in a way that the second utterance is identified as related to the first one as an expected follow-up to that utterance" (Paltridge, 2021, p. 100). Examples of adjacency pairs include questions and answers or requests for information and the provision thereof.

Adjacency pairs can be analysed in terms both of structure and of content. Structurally, the default case for adjacency pairs is to consist of a couple of turns, hence the name (i.e., "pair"). As the sequence of adjacency pairs is fixed, the two constituents of which a pair consists are called first part and second part (e.g., a question is the first part, and the answer given in response is the second part). However, it is possible for the two parts not to be adjacent as shown in Yule's (1996) example below:

Jean:	Could you mail this letter for me?	(Q1 = Request)
Fred:	Does it have a stamp on it?	(Q2)
Jean:	Yeah.	(A2)
Fred:	Okay.	(A1 = Acceptance)

(Yule, 1996, p. 78)

When the second part of an adjacency pair is separated from the first part by intervening turns as in the example above, the delay between the two ought to be seen as important (Yule, 1996) as there is a lack of immediacy in the response, which signifies something. The significance of such a delay derives from speakers' expectations for the content of adjacency pairs. It was proposed by Levinson (1983) that these expectations (i.e., speakers' anticipation of a follow-up to their first part) can be dichotomised into "preferred" and "dispreferred" second parts. As a rule, a positive second part is preferable to a negative one: If, for instance, a request is the first part, then the acceptance of it would be the preferred second part, whereas the refusal of the request would constitute a dispreferred second part. What is noteworthy about preference is that it influences both the manner in which second parts are formulated and what is expressed in them (i.e., semantic and pragmatic content). According to Wilkinson and Kitzinger (2011), "whereas preferred responses tend to occur without delay, and to be short and to the point, dispreferred responses are likely to be delayed and elaborated" (p. 26). This suggests that adjacency pairs are shaped fundamentally by preference; what is more, language users are tacitly aware of this element of communication at all times. Speakers' awareness of preference is evidently on display when, for example, offers are accepted or rejected. If a cup of tea were offered to someone in the first part of an adjacency pair, the second part would, in all likelihood,

be brief and simple (e.g., "yes, please") provided that the person formulating the response wanted to accept the offer. On the other hand, if they wished to decline the hot beverage, they might be inclined to fashion a more cumbersome response (e.g., "that would be nice, but I've had three cups this morning, so no, thank you"), thereby making the dispreferred second part marked in comparison. In spite of this, Levinson's terminology should not be deemed indicative of speakers' actual preferences in conversation; a preferred second part is merely the default—thus expected—response, which does not necessarily coincide with the wishes of the hearer whose first part necessitates the utterance of the second part.

As the exchange of turns is a universal feature of spoken interaction, CA has proved to be a widely used analytical tool in various domains of applied linguistic research, including in studies that focused on the use of ELF. Examples of the study of ELF data through conversation analytical means include Firth's (1996) research, in which the conduct of international trade by telephone calls was analysed; Konakahara's (2015) study, which focused on international students' use of questions that overlap; Björkman's (2018) investigation, which examined postgraduate students' negotiation practices and means of knowledge construction during meetings with their supervisors; and Pietikäinen's (2020) enquiry, in which international couples' interactions were subjected to CA in order to investigate the prevalence of sequential orientation and to learn about the speakers' repair practices. Despite the popularity of CA in the analysis of spoken interaction, findings yielded by conversation analytical research are unlikely to be sufficient on their own to provide an accurate representation of the communication process experienced by language users because such analysis, by definition, represents the analyst's understanding of the data. Without emic input from research participants, interaction can be analysed based only on external criteria (e.g., as in the case of preference in adjacency pairs), which offer limited relevance to analysts given that "patterns of conversational interaction differ substantially from one social group to another" (Yule, 1996, p. 72). What is more, there is difference in interactional patterns even between speakers within what is considered a single, homogeneous group (cf. dialect vs. idiolect). Thus, it seems necessary for CA to be supplemented with emic information obtained from the individuals whose conversations are analysed. By exploring participants' perspectives, researchers may be able to fine-tune their analysis of interaction and arrive at interpretations of particular utterances which are representative of speakers' intentions and understanding.

2.3 Empirical Findings on ELF

The use of English as a lingua franca has generated enormous research interest since the initial attempts were made in the 1990s and early 2000s (e.g., Firth, 1996; House, 2002; Jenkins, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 2003; Seidlhofer, 2001) to understand the phenomenon. By the second decade of the 21st century, ELF had become an established branch of applied linguistic enquiry with its own specialised periodical (the *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, of which two issues have been published annually since 2012) and with scholars regularly convening at academic conferences held all over the world to discuss the latest research on ELF. Furthermore, issues pertaining to the use of ELF have been the subject of monographs and edited volumes covering a wide array of topic areas ranging from language pedagogy (e.g., Gimenez et al., 2018; Illés & Bayyurt, 2024; Zein, 2019) and language policy (e.g., Jenkins, 2014; Rudwick, 2022) to English for specific purposes (e.g., Pitzl, 2010; Tweedie & Johnson, 2022) and pragmatics (e.g., Illés, 2020; Kecskes, 2019; Walkinshaw, 2022) to mention but a few. Given the wealth of ELF research, the focus of the overview below has been restricted to studies whose findings are of direct relevance to the study of ELF communication in international contexts.

It should be noted that pertinent findings have been yielded by heterogeneous research foci, which makes the synthesis of the relevant research less than straightforward. For instance, in a recent review of pragmatic strategies, Kaur (2022) categorised findings of empirical research on ELF into solidarity-promoting and rapport-building strategies on the one hand and comprehension-enhancing strategies on the other hand. Even though such a distinction can be useful for the purpose of an overview, it can also convey the impression that features of language use form discrete classes that can be compartmentalised. In reality, pragmatic strategies are abstract tools of interpretation that allow researchers to find similarity in particular instances of usage as demonstrated, for example, by repetition, which is a frequently analysed feature of ELF. In a study conducted by Cogo (2009), repetition was shown to be an example of the accommodation strategies used in ELF interaction, whereas the same discourse feature was found to serve a series of other functions by Lichtkoppler (2007), whose research examined the role of repetition in ELF dialogue more widely. Thus, the belief that particular features of ELF communication can be equated with specific pragmatic functions in a general sense would be an erroneous assumption (NB. neither of the researchers made such a claim) because different studies have shown different functions performed by the same language features. Therefore,

overlaps between the findings of various studies are to be expected. With this in mind, the organisation of the overview of the relevant literature presented here is based broadly on the researchers' methods rather than specifically on their research results as the latter would not be a feasible approach. Hence, empirical findings on ELF have been grouped into three categories: The first one includes research conducted on ELF corpus data; investigations in the second category explored features of ELF communication chiefly through conversation analytical means, whereas the third category is comprised of studies with an explicitly emic orientation to data analysis.

2.3.1 *Corpus Research on ELF*

The subject of ELF corpora was broached by Seidlhofer (2001), who argued for the necessity of the corpus-based description of ELF given that the prevailing view at the time was that ELF may be a variety. In response to this call, three major ELF corpora have been compiled, the first of which was the Vienna–Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE), created at the University of Vienna. According to its website (VOICE, n.d.), the corpus consists of approximately 1,000,000 words produced by as many as 1,250 speakers in the course of ELF conversations; the data are exclusively spoken, which means that the corpus allows the characteristics of verbal interactions in ELF contexts to be studied due to the spontaneity of speech. Initial analyses of data from VOICE revealed that some features of ELF lexicogrammar were "generally unproblematic and no obstacle to communicative success" (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 220) despite being different from conventional Standard English usage. The ELF features that Seidlhofer (2004) highlighted included the omission of the third-person inflection from verbs in the present tense, the interchangeable use of the pronouns "which" and "who", the use of articles without conformity to Standard English conventions, the formation of question tags without using the auxiliary from the main clause, the insertion of prepositions in places where they would be considered redundant in Standard English, overreliance on a set of common verbs, the use of "that" clauses in place of infinitival constructions, and a general tendency to engage in communication in an overly specific manner by, for example, adding the word "colour" after a colour (p. 220). Although nonstandard features of lexicogrammar such as the ones listed above do not seem to pose a risk to communicative success in ELF interactions, Seidlhofer (2004) went on to mention unilateral idiomaticity as a possible source of difficulty for interlocutors in ELF situations: Problems in communication are likely to arise when a speaker uses lexical items—

typically idiomatic expressions pervaded by semantic opacity—with which the hearer is unfamiliar. Such situations may hinder mutual intelligibility and require interactants to negotiate meaning.

A central tenet of ELF research, in line with the principles of descriptive linguistics, is that scholars attempt to describe ELF communication without expecting their participants to conform to externally prescribed conventions (e.g., Standard English) given that "speakers of whatever L1 can appropriate ELF for their own purposes without over-deference to native-speaker norms" (Hülmbauer et al., 2008, p. 27). This is what characterised the analytical stance of Pitzl et al. (2008), who used VOICE to examine lexical innovation in the data. To find innovative forms, they searched for pronunciation variations and coinages in the corpus and described the ways in which speakers in ELF communication had appropriated English for the achievement of their communicative goals. Overall, they found 247 instances of innovative lexical expression, with the idiosyncratic usages spread across 12 categories. The lexical innovations most frequently identified by Pitzl et al. pertained to suffixation and prefixation (e.g., in words such as "increasive", "preferently", or "non-formal", pp. 31–32). The researchers also discovered other types of lexical innovation such as borrowing (e.g., the use of the Dutch word "decreet" instead of the English "decree", p. 35), analogy drawn between regular and irregular verbs (e.g., "thinked, catched, drived", p. 36) as well as between countable and uncountable nouns (e.g., "advices", p. 36), and what they called reduction (e.g., "manufacters", p. 38). The findings led Pitzl et al. to conclude that it is not without some kind of purpose that speakers in ELF situations use language innovatively. The authors suggested that the use of innovative lexical forms can be due to four underlying reasons: Speakers may produce their own coinages in order to increase clarity, to find economical ways of expression, to regularise language features, or to fill lexical gaps.

Aside from lexicology, other aspects of ELF communication such as pragmatics have also been researched with the help of the VOICE data. An example of such a study is Ferenčík's (2012) research, in which aspects of politeness in a conversation between two students were examined. It was suggested that the speakers could be conceptualised in terms of being a narrator and a narratee based on the roles that they seemed to adopt in the course of their dialogue. One of Ferenčík's main findings was that overt indicators of politeness were absent from the participants' speech, which prompted the researcher to highlight the difficulty that analysts face

in the identification of pragmatic phenomena (in this case: politeness) in interactional data. However, Ferenčík noted that what the apparent lack of politeness markers means is not that the interaction was conducted in an impolite manner "but rather that the speakers' potential (im)polite/rude, etc., intentions surface in the hearers' interpretations/evaluations" (Ferenčík, 2012, p. 125). In other words, "politeness is in the eye of the beholder" (Meyer, 2014, p. 87) in the sense that it is the hearer's or analyst's expectations that are projected onto a communicative event and recognised as sings of politeness or impoliteness. A conclusion which could be drawn from Ferenčík's research is that there is a need for participants' perspectives to be explored in order to understand what constitutes the etic understanding of researchers and the emic experience of participants.

The ELFA project, which stands for English as an Academic Lingua Franca, has spawned another European corpus of ELF that has enabled researchers to study how multilingual speakers use English in academic contexts of communication. Compiled at Finnish universities, the ELFA corpus consists of 131 hours of speech, which is equivalent to approximately 1,000,000 words produced by 650 participants who came from 51 different linguacultural backgrounds (Mauranen & Ranta, 2008). Native speakers of English were also among the participants, but spoken data produced by them comprise only about 5% of the corpus. Besides collecting data from a diverse pool of speakers, the researchers also strove for diversity in terms of the speech events that constitute the corpus: The data were drawn from various academic areas including the social and natural sciences as well as medicine and technology. Mauranen and Ranta (2008) stated that "a deliberate bias was built into the sampling by favouring dialogic events such as seminars and discussion sections (which make up 67 % of the data), because the idea was to capture ELF speech taking shape in interaction" (p. 200). Accordingly, the ELFA corpus has been made use of particularly in the research of dialogic discourse.

In an overview of language features found in academic ELF communication, Mauranen (2010a) described features of discourse identified in the ELFA corpus as belonging to three main categories: "negotiating topics, metadiscourse, and self-rephrasing" (p. 13). The first of these, which is typically called left dislocation in studies on syntax, was referred to as "negotiating topic" by Mauranen in order to emphasise the interactional function which the phenomenon serves. It involves the fronting of a subject followed by a pronoun that stands for the same subject as in sentences like, "these kids they never learn". This feature is believed to "facilitate

comprehension by helping ensure that speaker and hearer have the same topic in mind" (Mauranen, 2010a, p. 14). Another explicitness strategy is the use of metadiscourse, which is alternatively called discourse reflexivity (see also Mauranen, 2010b, 2023), defined by Mauranen (2010a) as "discourse about the ongoing discourse" (p. 14). In practical terms, discourse reflexivity occurs when speakers explicitly comment on what they are saying or what they wish to achieve by making the utterance. The feature was shown by Mauranen to fulfil one of three functions: The ELFA data include speakers who used discourse reflexivity to introduce topics, to explain how they relate to the substance of their utterances, or to signal their desire to change the topic or direction of discourse (p. 15). The final discourse feature presented by Mauranen is self-rephrasing, which is essentially a form of repetition. There may be a number of reasons why speakers resort to rephrasing what they have said. By engaging in self-rephrasing, "speakers can buy time …, do self-repairs …, rephrase what was already said to make it clearer or more to the point, or perhaps more effective …. Repetition and rephrasing is also used to organise discourse" (Mauranen, 2010a, p. 16). Although repetition and rephrasing can be caused by these reasons in ELF and non-ELF contexts alike, Mauranen hypothesised that cooperativeness might be an overarching reason for repetition specific to ELF communication. This appears to be the case particularly in instances which involve the repetition of what one speaker said by another speaker. Such practices allow interlocutors to engage in collaborative discourse construction, which Mauranen deemed important as it can "contribute to not just discourse coherence but also social cohesion" (p. 18) among interactants.

Researchers have also made attempts at describing the interactional work undertaken by interlocutors to prevent communication breakdowns from happening in ELF contexts. Using recordings of four seminar discussions and a conference session from the ELFA corpus, Mauranen (2006) analysed the ways in which speakers in academic ELF situations had signalled and avoided misunderstandings. A general finding was that misunderstandings had not occurred frequently as Mauranen and her assistant were able to identify six instances altogether in 5 hours of spoken data. When the participants encountered difficulty in understanding one another, they tended to signal it in an overt manner: They either asked direct questions (i.e., to request that the meaning of a particular word be explained), or they repeated the lexical item(s) that they found incomprehensible. Less direct and less specific ways of signalling noncomprehension such as making open-ended clarification requests (e.g., "what?" or "hm?") were also identified. It is

likely that misunderstandings were rare chiefly because the speakers in the segments analysed took preventive action to avoid having to deal with misunderstandings. The participants' efforts to this end can be described as "proactive work in talk", which "appeared as a striking feature of this ELF interaction. Speakers were requesting clarification or confirmation frequently, and subsequently rephrasing their utterances or providing additional explanations" (Mauranen, 2006, p. 135). Misunderstandings in Mauranen's data were avoided, specifically, through the use of confirmation checks (e.g., "did I understand right?", p. 136); interactive repair (i.e., repair involving more than one speaker); and self-repair, which was stated to have been so common as to make its quantification pointless (p. 138). As mentioned above, a few misunderstandings did occur despite the speakers' attempts at preventing them. The causes of misunderstandings were partly linguistic (e.g., misheard utterances) and partly pragmatic (e.g., misinterpreted speech acts). Nevertheless, Mauranen noted that "the communicative turbulence caused by misunderstanding was eventually overcome in every case" (p. 144).

An additional aspect of interaction that has been examined by analysing data in the ELFA corpus is the use of hedging to soften criticism in academic interaction. Riekkinen (2010) conducted a study in which the use of hedging as a politeness strategy was explored in academic ELF contexts and compared to similar speech events in English-as-a-first language contexts. The comparison was made possible by obtaining data from two corpora: Riekkinen examined spoken interaction during PhD thesis defences in the ELFA corpus and juxtaposed the data with defences from the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English in what was essentially an intercorpus analysis of hedging. The main outcome of the comparison was the finding that speakers in the native English corpus were somewhat more inclined to use hedging than speakers in the ELF contexts: "On average, the native speakers used 4.44 lexical hedges per minute whereas the ELF-speakers used 3.85 lexical hedges per minute. The native speakers thus used approximately 13% more lexical hedges than the ELF-speakers" (Riekkinen, 2010, p. 78). This led Riekkinen to suggest that speakers in the ELF contexts examined were more content-oriented, which may be the reason why they allocated less of their resources to the implementation of politeness strategies. Another difference found between the two groups was in the heterogeneity of the hedges employed by the speakers: The native English data included a more extensive range of hedging devices by as much as 30%, which Riekkinen attributed to the tendency in ELF communication for speakers to prefer using expressions that offer increased

explicitness and to eschew complicated structures. The analysis showed that "the most frequent lexical hedges of the ELF-speakers were *I think* (20%); *would* (9%); *kind of* (7.5%); *could* (5%); *a bit* (4.5%); *just* (3.25%); and *and so on* (3%)" (Riekkinen, 2010, p. 81). Despite the fact that speakers in ELF contexts were found to have used hedging devices differently from speakers in native English environments, Riekkinen emphasised that the difference should not be seen as a deficiency on the ELF users' part; instead, the differences in hedging are likely to be indicative of the functional aspect of ELF interaction, with speakers striving for explicitness and clarity in communication.

The ELFA corpus has also permitted researchers to gain insights into speech events where the nature of talk is less dialogic than during seminar discussions and thesis defences. Drawing on a 74,000-word subcorpus of nine lectures from three academic areas, Wang (2021) investigated language use in ELF contexts with the aim of identifying interpersonal formulaic sequences. Wang's quest for formulaic sequences yielded 2,777 results, whose functions were classified by the researcher as belonging to the categories of "modality", "evaluation", "commitment", and "engagement" based on Halliday's interpersonal metafunction (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Similarity was found across the three disciplines in terms of the frequency of formulaic sequences that had the apparent function of expressing commitment and modality, but Wang indicated that lectures from the social sciences were different in that they included a higher number of formulaic sequences aimed at creating engagement with the audience. By contrast, evaluative formulaic sequences were produced more commonly during lectures within the disciplines of medicine and the natural sciences. The findings prompted Wang to conclude—cautiously—that the differences in interpersonal formulaic sequences may "be associated with different disciplines in terms of how knowledge is constructed and presented" (Wang, 2021, p. 155) with evaluation being more common in hard sciences and engagement in the humanities, but Wang stressed that further research is needed on a larger database to verify this hypothesis.

In addition to the descriptive work carried out on the European corpora (i.e., VOICE & ELFA), corpus research has also been conducted in East Asian contexts in order to discover how English is used for international communication by speakers from predominantly Asian backgrounds. Thus, the third ELF corpus is descriptively called the Asian Corpus of English (ACE), and it was created in fulfilment of five main criteria: It was intended to be a spoken corpus of ELF; it had to capture ELF interaction (i.e., as opposed to monologic speech); the data

had to occur naturally (i.e., as opposed to being elicited); the relationships between the speakers in the corpus were to be diverse; the speech events comprising the corpus were to be recorded in their entirety (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p. 13). The resultant corpus bears resemblance to the other two corpora in terms of its size and scope: The specification on the ACE website states that the database contains as many as 1,000,000 words, and the linguistic data were collected from discussions taking place in a variety of contexts including seminar conversations, meetings, or press conferences (Asian Corpus of English, n.d.). The same source also indicates that contributions to the ACE were made by subteams working in nine different countries within Asia, which is a testament to the diversity of the data. Owing to the richness of its interactional data, the ACE has given rise to research on various aspects of ELF pragmatics.

Politeness is among the aspects of the pragmatics of communication in ELF contexts that researchers explored by analysing data from the ACE. For example, the strategies that Asian interlocutors in ELF encounters used to preserve face were examined in a study conducted by Walkinshaw and Kirkpatrick (2014). The participants belonged to nine nationalities, and the volume of data analysed was 12.5 hours of speech. The focus of the analysis was on the maintenance of rapport in speech situations that potentially posed a threat to the face of some of the speakers. It was found that "in the majority of cases, potential face-threats were countered with a move to normalise the flow of conversation and maintain the overall rapport between interactants" (Walkinshaw & Kirkpatrick, 2014, p. 286). The strategies which the participants used for face preservation fell into nine categories: 1) bald-on-record disagreeing response with support and 2) without support, 3) foregrounding the potentially face-threatening nature of statements, 4) off-record disagreement with potentially face-threatening statements, 5) signalling comity via affirming discourse markers, 6) ignoring potentially face-threatening statements, 7) agreement with potentially face-threatening statements, 8) laughter, and 9) changing the topic (Walkinshaw & Kirkpatrick, 2014, pp. 275–285). Walkinshaw and Kirkpatrick considered their findings largely to be consistent with previous research on face preservation, but they called attention to two specific strategies which seemed to confound expectations: mock impoliteness and bald-on-record contradictions. An explanation as to why the participants used mock impoliteness as a communication strategy may be that "in lingua franca talk, actions which might attract sanctions according to first-language norms (such as mock impoliteness strategies evaluated as inappropriate) are less likely to be censured" (Walkinshaw & Kirkpatrick, 2014, pp.

286–287). The authors hypothesised that the second unexpected strategy (i.e., on-record contradictions) could have occurred due to the general tendency in ELF to suspend adherence to external norms of interaction, which would—in this case—have included norms pertaining to disagreement. However, Walkinshaw and Kirkpatrick emphasised that neither phenomenon can be definitively accounted for without further research. These findings, then, appear to necessitate the exploration of the perspectives of interactants engaged in ELF communication given that etic analyses conducted without emic input do not seem to provide adequate explanations of why speakers use language in the ways they do.

The data contained in the ACE corpus have facilitated pragmalinguistic research on aspects of ELF such as the expression of emotions. Thompson (2022), who pointed out that pragmaticians had left the various functions of conversational interjections largely unexplored, researched interjections in specifically ELF contexts of communication. The study centred around three objectives: The first aim was to explore the types and the frequency of the interjections that speakers in ELF interactions make as well as to draw a comparison between the data in the ELF corpus and similar data in an English-as-a-first-language corpus. A secondary aim was to discover the functions according to which interjections can be categorised. Thirdly, Thompson attempted to learn whether there are occasions when ELF users opt out of using interjections despite having the opportunity to do so. To achieve these ends, 60 conversations from the ACE were analysed, and the results were compared with lists of interjections from the American Conversation section of the Longman Spoken and Written English corpus. Thompson found "yeah", "oh", "ah", "yes", "hm(m)", "mm", "no", "yah", "mhm", and "eh" to have been the 10 most frequent interjections in the ELF corpus. Interestingly, "yeah" and "oh" were the two interjections that occurred most frequently in both corpora. In addition, there were two more overlaps between the top 10 of the databases: the interjections "mm" and "mhm". However, Thompson also underlined some notable differences such as the frequency of the interjection "ah", which was 785% more common in the ELF corpus than in the native English one. In terms of functional classification, Thompson suggested that interjections in the ACE were used for three main purposes: to express agreement (hence the high frequency of "yeah"), to express surprise at or interest in what was said, and to signal attention typically in the form of backchannelling. With regard to the third research focus, Thompson's findings indicate that interjections were not the preferred means of conveying negative emotions or dispreferred

speech acts; instead of using potentially ambiguous interjections, interactants in the ACE tended to express these emotions using explicit language structures (e.g., "I'm quite shocked").

2.3.2 *Conversation Analysis of ELF Communication*

Although the findings presented in this section were reported in studies in which conversation analysis (CA) had principally been utilised as the method of analysis in the examination of naturally occurring data, the exact methodology that gave rise to the results cannot be verified in every case as researchers do not always label their data analysis procedures. Nevertheless, the results below fall into the same broad category of CA findings given that each research paper provides descriptions either of strategies upon which speakers in ELF contexts rely for communicative success or of features that characterise ELF interaction. Due to the breadth of relevant conversation analytical research, however, the findings can be further classified into more specific groupings. Thus, there are three clusters of research discussed within this section: The first subcategory includes studies that investigated cooperation and communication strategies among speakers in ELF settings. Thereafter, investigations in which specific features of ELF interaction were explored are reviewed with a focus on three ubiquitous characteristics of ELF talk: repetition, questions, and repair. Finally, some research on the sources of problems and misunderstandings in ELF communication is presented.

2.3.2.1 CA: Strategies Used in ELF Communication

Conversation analytical methods were used in a study by Firth (1996) to examine how discursive normality is achieved. The data analysed were comprised of telephone conversations in which business transactions were conducted by parties of various nationalities who used English as their shared language of communication. It was noted that although "the notion of 'lingua franca interactions' is an analyst construct" (Firth, 1996, p. 241), interlocutors in such situations do occasionally orient to the ELF aspect of communication and make it relevant to their interaction. Even though the paper touched on general issues concerning the use of CA as a research method, the main finding of the study—in terms of ELF—was that "the orderly and 'normal' character of the talk is an *accomplished* and *contingent* achievement, sustained through locally-managed interactional, interpretive and linguistic 'work'" (Firth, 1996, p. 242). Firth argued that this interactional work is the result of interactants' willingness and ability to disregard idiosyncratic features of usage and focus instead on those aspects of communication that are crucial for the success of a given interaction. One of the conversational phenomena that

seems to contribute to the achievement of normality in ELF is what Firth referred to as the let-it-pass principle, which entails speakers' acting on the presumption of mutual understanding even in the absence of it and hoping that whatever is not understood will become clear as the interaction progresses. A related feature of ELF discussions is what Firth labelled as make-it-normal, which occurs when a speaker adopts a nonstandard form previously produced by another party in the exchange, thereby normalising the form rather than highlighting or correcting it. In Firth's view, these features observed in the data make ELF interaction robust and reduce its susceptibility to breakdowns. Nevertheless, Firth also drew attention to a problem that conversation analysts face: It is only "*on the basis of displayed orientations*" (Firth, 1996, p. 244) that researchers can identify what it was that speakers let pass or made normal. Appearances, however, can be deceptive, which is why it may be beneficial to supplement etic analyses of conversations with emic input from those who converse.

Much like qualitative research findings in general, the results reported by Firth (1996) are to be understood in their own context, but they are not necessarily generalisable. In particular, the view that speakers engaged in ELF communication let whatever they do not understand pass without drawing attention to it has been called into question. For instance, Cogo and Dewey (2006) argued that interlocutors in ELF contexts are more likely to focus on segments of talk in which noncomprehension occurs and negotiate meaning than to let it pass. Furthermore, Cogo and Dewey found ELF interactional data to have been characterised by a high degree of accommodation, which was manifest in the strategies that participants employed to achieve convergence. The researchers suggested that speakers in ELF interaction may want their conversational styles to converge either to make communication more efficient and thereby increase intelligibility or to behave in a cooperative manner and indicate, for instance, their attentiveness or their agreement with what is being said. Repetition was mentioned as a strategy by which speakers may achieve a degree of accommodation (e.g., when repeating a word or phrase used previously by someone else in the conversation). In Cogo and Dewey's data, there is evidence which suggests that speakers in ELF dialogue may even opt for accommodation at the expense of adherence to Standard English usage; by way of an example, a conversation is cited in which a first speaker omitted the definite article from a phrase, and a second speaker repeated the phrase verbatim. In this regard, then, accommodation by repetition is similar to the make-it-normal practice described by Firth in that it involves the reproduction of potentially marked

usage (e.g., nonstandard forms), but Cogo and Dewey emphasised the additional functions that accommodation serves beyond normalisation such as showing alignment and creating efficiency in communication.

Some of the phenomena denoted by the terminology that Firth (1996) introduced also constituted the focus of the investigation conducted by Jenks (2012), who studied the ways in which participants reproved one another in online ELF conversations. Jenks found that the speakers in the ELF contexts examined had not always let communication problems pass; on the contrary, "findings showed that interactants are at times inclined to reprehensively highlight … problems or troubles in communication. The sequential organization of doing being reprehensive is different than the practice of letting it pass" (Jenks, 2012, p. 401). The difference lay chiefly in the fact that Jenks's participants—unlike those who would let problems pass—were minded to attract other speakers' attention to communication problems shortly after the occurrence of the problems (i.e., without waiting for clarity to emerge in the course of interaction); what is more, they were even prepared to admonish their interlocutors for contributing to discussions in a manner which impeded intelligibility. An example which Jenks gave for this interactional feature was of a speaker who had made what may be seen as critical remarks on the contribution of another speaker whose speech style lacked fluency: The first speaker demanded that their peer talk and open their mouth whilst doing so (p. 394). Jenks's results gave rise to the conclusion that although ELF interaction is sometimes characterised by the let-it-pass principle, interactants in ELF situations may equally do the opposite and make their communication difficulties relevant to their discussions. However, Jenks stressed that there is no single practice which can be established as the norm because the context of communication will act as a fundamental determinant of what is appropriate in a given interaction. Ultimately, the findings highlighted the importance of context in ELF communication, with the author suggesting that "future ELF research must pay special attention to the contextual and situational issues that compel interactants to communicative [*sic*] in a particular way" (Jenks, 2012, p. 402).

The context of communication was also found to have been greatly significant in ELF interaction by Pölzl and Seidlhofer (2006), who investigated the ways in which the local context (i.e., including the physical location of interactants) influenced interactions between speakers. The researchers referred to these aspects of context as the habitat factor, with the term "habitat" being used to "mean the setting which interlocutors recognize as their own (their natural

habitat)" (Pölzl & Seidlhofer, 2006, p. 155). The habitat factor was shown to be an important component of speech events that influences speakers' perceptions of the discourse styles and the norms of communication that are seen as appropriate. The specific habitat in which Pölzl and Seidlhofer studied ELF interaction happened to be in Jordan, and the data were drawn from a spontaneous discussion that involved four Jordanian students and an Austrian researcher. The results of the analysis, which focused on a diverse set of discourse features including negotiation markers; phase-specific speech acts; and turn alignment, demonstrated that the Jordanian speakers' participation in the ELF interaction had been influenced by their natural habitat, which was indicated by their propensity to apply their L1 norms of communication to the ELF situation. The findings prompted the researchers to "suggest that norms for pragmatic fluency are highly context-dependent and ought to be interpreted with closer attention to the attitudinal effects on interlocutors of the actual location of the interaction" (Pölzl & Seidlhofer, 2006, p. 172). Thus, Pölzl and Seidlhofer's results seem to provide further justification for ELF research to be conducted with a view to exploring language users' emic perspectives given that the attitudinal effects that influence speakers' perceptions of contextual appropriateness are not easily ascertainable from the etic perspective of researchers.

In addition to the role of context in communication, the strategies that interactants in ELF settings use in order to manage their interactions and communicate with each other successfully have also been widely researched. For example, Björkman (2014) examined communication in groupwork sessions in which students used English as their shared language for interaction in a Swedish higher education context and systematically classified the communication strategies used by the students. In terms of methodology, the communication strategies "were identified by studying the surrounding discourse carefully and considering the previous and following turns" (Björkman, 2014, p. 129), that is, the data were analysed from a predominantly etic perspective. Nevertheless, the analysis indicated that the tactics were typically deployed either by those who were speaking or by those who were listening; hence, Björkman dichotomised the strategies, of which there were seven in total, into self-initiated communication strategies and other-initiated ones. The self-initiated communication strategies consisted of explicitness strategies, comprehension checks, and word replacement. The explicitness strategies on which the speakers in Björkman's study relied were repetition (e.g., keywords were repeated to enhance clarity), simplification (e.g., by adding "two times" after "double", p. 130), signalling importance (i.e.,

explicitly highlighting discourse deemed important), and paraphrasing (i.e., rephrasing a message with the apparent aim of making it clearer). Comprehension checks were utterances that speakers used to determine whether they were being understood (e.g., "you know what I mean", p. 131). The final self-initiated strategy, word replacement, was found to have pertained either to language (e.g., in the case of self-repair) or to content (e.g., when a word was replaced due to a factual rather than a linguistic error).

Björkman's (2014) framework also included other-initiated communication strategies, which were the following: confirmation checks, clarification requests, the cocreation of utterances, and word replacement. There were three distinct strategies under the umbrella of confirmation checks: paraphrasing (which happened when, e.g., hearers' overt indication of nonunderstanding prompted a speaker to rephrase an utterance), repetition (e.g., when speakers repeated terms less out of their own volition and more as a gesture of cooperativeness), and overt questions (which were asked by hearers to establish whether speakers were understood correctly). As such, there were two overlaps in Björkman's taxonomy between the self-initiated explicitness strategies and the other-initiated confirmation checks (i.e., repetition & paraphrasing), though they served somewhat different communicative functions. Clarification requests were also overt questions asked by hearers, but they differed from confirmation checks in that they were believed to have been asked specifically due to lack of understanding (i.e., with hearers asking for an explanation rather than simply checking whether their interpretation of what they heard was correct). Requests for clarification were sometimes made through what Björkman referred to as question repeats (i.e., the repetition of a word not understood with rising intonation). In addition, the participants were found to have engaged in the cocreation of messages, "where speakers fill in the blanks in each other's utterances in an effort to produce a complete utterance" (Björkman, 2014, p. 133). Finally, word replacement, which was among the self-initiated communication strategies, was identified also as an other-initiated strategy, whereby a hearer would suggest a word to a speaker as a preferable alternative to one previously used by the speaker (i.e., essentially other-repair), but Björkman added that this strategy had not occurred frequently in the data. The wide range of strategies used by speakers and hearers alike impelled Björkman to hypothesise that the rarity of breakdowns in ELF communication was due in equal measure to the interactional work undertaken by all parties (i.e., not only by speakers).

The collaborative interactional work which interactants carry out in the course of ELF communication was probed into by Hahl (2016), whose research focused specifically on how meaning and context are jointly constructed in educational settings. The objective of the study was to demonstrate that ELF interaction requires speakers to "step out of their own frames of reference in order to cooperatively negotiate meaning between different contexts and stretch their perspectives to successfully find common ground for mutual understanding" (Hahl, 2016, p. 85). In essence, Hahl argued that mutual understanding can come about only if language users are able—at least partially—to distance themselves from their own viewpoints and develop an understanding of how others may look upon instances of interaction, which is a perspective on communication that closely resembles the analytical approach adopted in the present study (i.e., the need for the exploration of language use from multiple perspectives). The speakers whose negotiation practices Hahl investigated were a group of international students and their lecturer in a teacher education module held at a Finnish university. A turn-by-turn analysis of a 10-minute conversation between them yielded insight into the various communication strategies which the participants used to negotiate meaning including paraphrasing, asking questions, repetition, signalling nonunderstanding, making suggestions, and mediation (pp. 91–99). Occasionally, there were overlaps between the strategies as some of them resulted from a combination of other strategies; for example, mediation, which happens "when another person joins in to help the interlocutors to understand each other" (Hahl, 2016, p. 95), was found to have been performed through the use of repetition and rephrasing. Overall, Hahl noted that it had been necessary for the speakers to reduce discrepancies between their linguistic and cultural knowledge, thereby creating conditions for contextual understanding. The results also point towards the importance of the indication of nonunderstanding as such signalling enables individuals to achieve comprehension by drawing on the shared resources of the group.

The manner in which speakers engage in the negotiation of meaning was also at the centre of Cogo's (2010) attention in a study that concentrated on the strategic use of English in ELF situations. The setting whence data were collected was an office in which speakers of English from diverse first-language backgrounds (i.e., French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese) were conversing. The findings include an example of the type of negotiation of meaning that is necessitated by what Seidlhofer (2004) referred to as unilateral idiomaticity. In a discussion analysed by Cogo, one of the participants used the adjective "cheesy" but felt that the

word had not adequately conveyed the intended meaning, so the speaker added the French expression "fleur bleue" to supplement the utterance. What Cogo found interesting in the use of the culturally specific phrase was that the speaker had anticipated the difficulty that the use of a non-English expression was likely to cause and attempted to resolve it first by prefacing the French expression with its English equivalent (i.e., "blue flower") and then by adding a follow-up explanation of what it means. Despite the apparent one-sidedness of the interactional work undertaken by the speaker, it was noted that the negotiation of meaning had been jointly conducted as the participants used "various interactional features such as overlaps, backchannels (such as 'yeah'), repetitions and latchings" (Cogo, 2010, p. 302), which not only made the interaction more efficient but also contributed to the unity of the conversation. Cogo also showed the creative use of English and playfulness to have been instrumental in addressing issues arising from idiomaticity. In another segment of interaction, a speaker used the expression "on the same boat" but sensed that a different preposition was needed before the noun phrase; thus, the speaker appealed for help explicitly by asking, "how do you say?" (p. 303). However, the others were also unsure as to what preposition was needed before "the same boat". Thus, another participant playfully introduced alternative vehicles (e.g., the same train or bus) into the conversation, thereby implying that the expression was variable. This prompted the interactants to agree that the preposition was of little significance as they were "all foreigners" (p. 303). Cogo suggested that the element of foreignness overtly stated at the end of the exchange was, in fact, an underlying factor throughout the conversation and an important contributor to in-group cohesion.

Focusing on communication in an Italian university context, Gotti (2014) analysed in-class ELF discourse to shed light on the explanatory strategies used by lecturers as well as on the interactional work undertaken by the participants (i.e., students and lecturers) to enhance comprehension. The lessons that Gotti observed were taught in English and attended by groups of international students; neither the lecturers nor the students were native speakers of English. It was found that the interlocutors were able to achieve mutual intelligibility largely due to the fact that both the lecturers and the students made use of various cooperative and explanatory strategies as well as other communication strategies. Gotti identified a range of metadiscursive strategies used by the participants such as frame markers (i.e., explanations of the purpose of talk comparable to discourse reflexivity as described by Mauranen, 2010a), rhetorical questions, rephrasing, adding emphasis, and introducing an element of interactivity into explanations (pp.

346–352). In addition to the characteristics of ELF discourse, various cooperative strategies were also discovered in the data. Upon experiencing difficulty in communication, Gotti's participants worked together on resolving the interactional problems. Similarly to other contexts of ELF communication, "utterance completion where students continue the lecturer's sentence by providing fitting words or specific technical terms" (Gotti, 2014, p. 354) was also found in the speech events of this study. For instance, willingness to construct ELF discourse jointly was exhibited by Italian students who came to the aid of a non-Italian lecturer when the latter struggled to pronounce local place names. Moreover, the students in the study also helped their lecturers find words that were not culturally specific; for example, the word "seal" was supplied by the audience in response to a lecturer's appeal for help that consisted of the French word "phoque" and the follow-up explanation that it was an "arctic animal" (p. 353). Examples such as this one underscore a point made earlier about the importance of multilingualism in ELF communication. Gotti concluded that the findings seem to corroborate those of previous studies in which interactants' willingness to cooperate had been described in other ELF settings and added that the participants appeared to have been supportive of one another owing partly to their awareness of the fact that they did not speak English as a first language.

2.3.2.2 CA: Typical Features of ELF Communication

As indicated above, three of the features that seem to characterise ELF interactions ubiquitously are repetition, questions, and repair. Repetition in particular is found in abundance when ELF interactions are analysed as evidenced by the research reviewed thus far (e.g., Björkman, 2014; Cogo, 2010; Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Hahl, 2016; Mauranen, 2010a). The frequent occurrence of questions in ELF discourse has also been attested to in empirical studies (e.g., Björkman, 2014; Gotti, 2014; Hahl, 2016; Mauranen, 2006), and repair has similarly been shown to be made use of by interactants in ELF settings (e.g., Björkman, 2014; Mauranen, 2006, 2010a). Because of their virtually universal presence in ELF interactional data, these features merit further discussion; therefore, a brief overview of additional empirical research findings on the three common characteristics of ELF communication is presented below.

A regularly occurring feature of usage in contexts of ELF communication, repetition has been found to fulfil a number of functions (Cogo, 2009; Kaur, 2009; 2012; Lichtkoppler, 2007). The different purposes for which it might be used by speakers in ELF settings were studied by Lichtkoppler (2007), who investigated the uses of repetition in conversations between

international students and staff at an accommodation office in Austria. The research project endured some loss of data due to "long gaps or low intelligibility" (Lichtkoppler, 2007, p. 50) caused by the acoustics of the physical setting; nevertheless, 21 exchanges were subjected to CA, and the functions of repetition in the dialogues analysed were shown to have been manifold. Lichtkoppler's participants used repetition for six discrete communicative functions, the first of which was gaining time: The speakers made use of repetition in a production-focused way to continue speaking whilst thinking about what to say next. Related to this were instances of utterance-developing repetition, which—in Lichtkoppler's view—served two purposes: They helped speakers find the right words and improved intelligibility; thus, this type of repetition was seen as being simultaneously production-oriented and comprehension-oriented (pp. 53–54). The third type of repetition was seen to have been used in order essentially to emphasise the content of utterances; hence, it was labelled as prominence-providing repetition. The fourth category included examples of repetition that appeared to have contributed to the accuracy of understanding, whereas the penultimate function of repetition observed in Lichtkoppler's data was to show listenership, that is, a type of backchannelling (e.g., when a speaker began their turn by repeating the last few words of another speaker from the previous turn). Finally, the interactants in Lichtkoppler's study also seemed to use repetition to create cohesion in their dialogues. The conclusion drawn from the findings was that the different types of repetition broadly fulfil three functions: "They facilitate the production of language, they support in the achievement of mutual understanding, and they help to show attitude and opinion" (Lichtkoppler, 2007, p. 59). Thus, Lichtkoppler conjectured that repetition might be an intrinsic element of all ELF communication but added that further research would be needed to prove this hypothesis.

Adopting an even narrower focus in the study of repetition, Kaur (2012) examined the role specifically of self-repetition in ELF interactions. The study, like conversation analytical research in general, was based on naturally occurring data, but Kaur's methodology was unique in that the participants—of whom there were 22—were asked to self-record their conversations so that they were able to provide data without the presence of the researcher. Self-repetition was operationalised as "talk that displayed a move by the speaker to disrupt the progress of an ongoing utterance in order to repeat some elements(s) in the preceding part of the utterance" (Kaur, 2012, p. 598). Kaur focused only on instances of self-repetition that seemed intentional

(i.e., rather than accidental); furthermore, repetition was clearly distinguished from paraphrase in that the repeated segments had to be nearly identical to the original ones in order for them to be considered for analysis.

Kaur's (2012) results showed that the speakers had used repetitions of four different types, which she termed "parallel phrasing", "key word(s) repetition", "combined repetition", and "repaired repetition" (pp. 599–606). Parallel phrasing was often a byproduct of listing things: The participants tended to produce duplicate structures when they enumerated similar items (e.g., "the first advantage", "the second advantage", and so on; p. 600). The repetition of keywords was deemed to have been an aspect of the recipient-oriented nature of ELF communication given that a possible reason for speakers to repeat key terms is to facilitate the comprehension of their overall message. Similar intentions may have been behind the use of combined repetition, which consisted, as the name suggests, of a combination of exact repetition and slightly rephrased repetition; Kaur believed that this type of repetition had made utterances easier to understand—particularly in cases when a synonym of a keyword was included in the repeated segments. Repaired repetition was mostly called into being by slips of the tongue: When participants made performance mistakes, they tended to repeat the correction. Aside from classifying the types of repetition found in the dialogues, Kaur highlighted the importance of context in interpretation and warned analysts against examining language data in isolation (e.g., in single turns), claiming that "with knowledge relating to the background of the interaction, a different interpretation is achieved" (Kaur, 2012, p. 610). In the light of this view, it can be suggested that research in which language use is explored through the analyst's as well as the participants' multiple perspectives is likely to result in a more accurate understanding of the phenomena studied than methods that utilise less background information would do.

In addition to Kaur's (2012) focus on self-repetition, aspects of other-repetition have also been investigated in the literature. For instance, the other-orientedness of interspeaker repetition was demonstrated by Cogo (2009), who conducted a case study to explore the ways in which interactants in ELF situations accommodate difference. To this end, Cogo examined spoken interaction within an ELF community of practice whose members conversed chiefly in a university context. The results showed two main accommodation strategies used by the participants: Code-switching and repetition, both of which were used to "signal agreement, listenership and engagement in conversation" (Cogo, 2009, p. 259). With regard to repetition, a

feature that seemed to characterise interpersonal repetition was its immediacy, that is, what a first speaker said at the end of their turn would often be repeated by a second speaker at the beginning of the subsequent turn. Cogo maintained that this use of repetition was indicative of speakers' desire to "signal alignment as well as maintaining rhythmic synchrony" (p. 261). Repetition, thus, was seen as a device which speakers can deploy strategically to express their agreement with and support for their interlocutors as well as to keep pace with the rhythm of conversations. Instances of repetition that included nonstandard forms were noteworthy in Cogo's data. An example of this was the phrase "because of revolution" (p. 262), which was uttered without a determiner by a first speaker and was repeated in an identical fashion a few turns later by a second speaker. Cogo observed that the second speaker had used definite articles in the remainder of the conversation, which was likely to mean that the second speaker had not accidentally omitted the article but used verbatim repetition consciously as an accommodation strategy. By repeating the nonstandard form without modification, the second speaker also avoided performing other-repair, which would have been a potentially face-threatening act. On the whole, Cogo considered repetition an example of convergence in ELF interactions and argued that it was one of the techniques used by speakers to accommodate diversity in contexts where English is used for communication by speakers from different linguacultural backgrounds.

Besides being an accommodation strategy, repetition has also been shown to be used as a preventive measure intended to keep misunderstandings at bay. In a study whose findings were based on conversational data collected from postgraduate students at a university in Malaysia, Kaur (2009) examined how speakers had used repetition to prevent problems—particularly issues of comprehension—in ELF communication. The use of repetition was analysed in three discourse situations: "after prolonged silence", "after minimal response", and "after overlapped talk" (Kaur, 2009, pp. 111–119). The different uses of repetition were established to have been efforts made by speakers to achieve shared understanding with their interlocutors. For example, Kaur examined an instance of repetition which had occurred after a pause that lasted for 1.2 seconds and concluded that the speaker repeated what they had said presumably because the gap in the conversation indicated a problem of understanding. In other words, repetition was used to facilitate comprehension as the lack of any indication of the hearer's understanding (e.g., in the form of backchannelling) gave the speaker the impression that the keywords needed to be repeated. Analogous reasons were thought to have given rise to repetition in cases when a

speaker's utterance was met with a muted response: Hearers' insufficient indication of comprehension would typically prompt a speaker to repeat key information from their previous turn. Similarly, concerns over comprehensibility were believed to have induced speakers to repeat parts of their message in situations when there was overlap between conversational turns: Kaur suggested that the overlapping segment of a first speaker's turn was repeated because the overlap created uncertainty as to whether the words were heard by the second speaker. The author of the study interpreted the different uses of repetition as a sign that it was paramount for interactants in ELF contexts to work towards and achieve mutual understanding and also highlighted the fact that speakers were keenly aware of "even the more subtle suggestions of trouble" (Kaur, 2009, p. 119) as demonstrated by their proactive use of repetition in the absence of overt nonunderstanding. In summary, repetition has been found to characterise ELF interactions for several reasons, which include aspects of language production, accommodation, and speakers' apparent intentions to achieve mutual understanding.

An additional feature of ELF communication which has been commonly researched is the use of questions. Although questions occur in non-ELF contexts as well, researchers (e.g., Björkman, 2012; Konakahara, 2015; Suviniitty, 2010) have focused on idiosyncrasies of usage which characterise the use of questions specifically in ELF interactions. In a study that examined how questions are asked in ELF classroom settings, Björkman (2012) enquired into the characteristics of questions and identified the cues that had signalled questions being asked in academic interactions. The data, which included in-class dialogues between students who were doing groupwork as well as spoken data produced by lecturers, were collected at a Swedish technical university. Björkman's analysis revealed that the participants' questions had been characterised by syntactic diversity as the data comprised main-clause questions asked with declarative word order (e.g., "I should remove it?", p. 101), questions in which an embedded clause was interrogative (e.g., "anybody knows what is black liquor?", p. 101), and questions that lacked a verb (e.g., "you know what the main difference?", p. 101). Thus, one of the findings of the study was that the use of Standard English grammar was not necessarily required for utterances to be understood given that sentences which speakers intended as questions were interpreted as such by hearers even when the word order was not interrogative. Instead of conventionally interrogative syntactic structures, it was intonation (specifically rising intonation) that proved to be "a potential universal that ELF users respond to" (Björkman, 2012, p. 115)

when it came to answering questions. In cases when intonation was insufficient to remove doubt concerning the illocutionary force of an utterance, the interlocutors sought clarification, which was sufficient to dissipate confusion. The findings suggest that there are "three cues that help the listener register a Wh-question: the interrogative adverb/pronoun, word order and intonation" (Björkman, 2012, p. 111), whereas closed (i.e., yes/no) questions lack an interrogative pronoun, providing listeners with only two indicators: word order and intonation. Björkman argued that—out of the two—intonation is the more easily recognised marker of questions in ELF communication.

Questions have also been analysed from the perspective of their contribution to ELF conversations. More specifically, Konakahara (2015) investigated the issue of whether overlapping questions amount to cooperation or competition amongst speakers in ELF contexts. The data were collected from informal conversations in which 15 international students enrolled at British universities were engaged. The interactions were video-recorded; what made the methods unique was that "embodied actions such as gestures, facial expressions, postural shifts …, and gaze orientation … were supplementarily analyzed in order to increase the reliability of the research" (Konakahara, 2015, p. 42). Aside from questions, fillers and backchannels also resulted in overlapping speech, but Konakahara focused only on questions as those are more likely to cause interruptions. A general finding which the analysis showed was that overlaps had not normally become interruptions. When overlapping questions did occur, the speakers were found to negotiate the situation by using resolutions techniques that included repeating what they had said immediately before the overlap, giving way to their interlocutor(s) by finishing their turn abruptly, or continuing their turn. Konakahara believed that the need to use resolution techniques was a sign of the problematic nature of overlapping questions. Nonetheless, the participants attended to these situations cooperatively rather than competitively: "They smoothly resolve the overlap and cooperatively develop the talk without adhering to the overlap. The overlapping speaker seeks clarification from the overlapped one, and the overlapped speaker provides an answer immediately in the next turn" (Konakahara, 2015, p. 50). Thus, overlapping questions were shown to have been an aspect of the interactional work which speakers in ELF settings do in order to ensure mutual understanding.

Research has also been conducted on how the use of questions can contribute to comprehensibility in ELF communication. Suviniitty (2010) investigated students' perceptions of

lectures by focusing on the role of questions in the process. The data analysed consisted of the recordings of 22 academic lectures held in English at a Finnish university and of students' retrospective comments—submitted by means of a questionnaire—indicating their comprehension of the lectures. An aspect of the context which differentiates this study from many others is that some of the questions in Suviniitty's data overtly exhibited the multilingual nature of ELF communication: An agreement between the participants allowed students whose first language was Finnish to ask questions in Finnish, which then required lecturers to translate the questions into English for the members of the audience who did not speak Finnish. Suviniitty dichotomised the questions that had occurred in the data into genuine questions and rhetorical questions. Each type of question appeared to have been used for two separate purposes. Genuine questions either performed the function of checking information (e.g., "do you have any questions…?", p. 49) or served as didactic elicitors (e.g., "what do we mean by insects?", p. 49), whereas rhetorical questions were used for focusing and organising discourse. The findings indicate "that the main difference was the use of questions" (Suviniitty, 2010, p. 55) between the lectures that students found easily comprehensible and those that they did not. The students rated lectures in which more questions were asked more favourably for clarity than they did those lectures that included fewer questions. Suviniitty conceded that students' comprehension is likely to be affected also by other factors like the topic of the lecture or the time at which a given lecture is held; nevertheless, the element of interaction which questions introduce into ELF discourse appears to contribute to hearers' comprehension of what is said. Hence, the results demonstrate the importance of questions in ELF communication owing to the element of cooperation questions introduce into ELF interactions and to the comprehension-enhancing effect they may have.

In addition to repetition and questions, repair has also been found to be among the prominent features of usage in ELF contexts of interaction (e.g., Björkman, 2011; Kaur, 2011; Lewis & Deterding, 2022). Influenced by early conversation analytical studies (e.g., Schegloff et al., 1977), scholars who research the pragmatics of communication in ELF contexts have maintained a clear distinction between self-repair and other-repair, and empirical findings have shown that self-repair is generally the more common of the two (e.g., Björkman, 2014; Firth, 1996; Mauranen, 2006). Other than correcting a performance mistake, self-repair may be used for the achievement of additional discourse goals, which is what Kaur (2011) focused on in a

study intended to examine how interactants in ELF settings use self-repair in order to increase the explicitness of their utterances. The analysis was based on 15 hours of conversational data produced by 22 speakers in an international university context, and the aim of the enquiry was "to determine what it is that is repaired and what the repair entails" (Kaur, 2011, p. 2707). The analysis resulted in the identification of two main categories of self-repair, which Kaur labelled as "righting the wrongs" (p. 2707) and "raising explicitness, enhancing clarity" (p. 2709). The two groups of self-repair were differentiated on the basis of whether an error of some type audibly preceded the repair. The instances of self-repair in the first group were those that followed a performance slip. Examples of mistakes that compelled Kaur's participants to perform self-repair included mispronunciation, erroneous word selection, and the unintended use of nonstandard grammar.

By contrast, Kaur's (2011) second category of self-repair—as indicated by its descriptor—consisted of examples that seemed to be used to increase explicitness rather than to correct a mistake. Kaur attributed the functions of raising explicitness and providing clarification to instances of self-repair which had come about as a result of word replacement that specified meaning. For example, the participants sometimes repaired their speech when they wanted to use a lexical item whose meaning in a semantic sense was narrower than that of a word used previously (e.g., "know" was replaced with "understand"). The specification of utterances was also achieved "by inserting a qualifying lexical item where and when necessary" (Kaur, 2011, p. 2710) such as the insertion of the adjective "original" before the noun phrase "member state" (p. 2710) to make the meaning narrower. The speakers in the study were also shown to have raised explicitness through pronominal self-repair; on occasion, they started their utterances with a pronoun and soon added the noun to which it referred by way of clarification (e.g., "she didn't mention" was followed up with "professor didn't mention", p. 2710). In addition, Kaur identified instances of metadiscursive self-repair in the data; these did not involve word replacement. Instead, the participants used the discourse marker "I mean" to indicate either that they were rephrasing their original message or that they had abandoned their original message and were saying something else. It was Kaur's impression that the self-repair practices found in the data signalled speakers' awareness of potential communication problems and contributed to the prevention thereof.

Repair was also investigated as part of a study with a broader focus on pragmatic strategies in academic ELF settings by Björkman (2011), who analysed spoken data from lectures as well as from student groupwork discussions at a university in Sweden. Björkman mentioned that usage in the context examined had been characterised by a tendency to deviate from Standard English; therefore, repair was a feature of interest irrespective of whether it was self-repair or other-repair. In this regard, a particularly noteworthy finding was "that there were no cases of other-repair in the student group-work material" (Björkman, 2011, p. 958), and neither were there any in the lectures, which is to say that all of the 61 cases of repair in the data were instances of self-repair. Self-repair was found to have been performed for three main reasons. Self-repair was necessitated most frequently by what Björkman called linguistic elements (e.g., the lack of concord as in "it will requires", which was immediately followed by "it will require", p. 958). Björkman's participants were forced to carry out self-repair also when they made minor performance mistakes (i.e., slips of the tongue); furthermore, there were examples of self-repair that pertained to the content of what was being said. Despite the fact that other-repair was not found either in the lectures or in the groupwork sessions, Björkman called attention to a difference between the two types of data: There were more cases of self-repair identified in the groupwork discussions than in the lectures, which, as Björkman suggested, may have been a reflection of the difference between the speech event types (i.e., monologic vs. dialogic speech).

In the light of the prevalence of self-repair in ELF interactional data, the findings reported by Lewis and Deterding (2022) are novel in that they offer insights into the pragmatics of other-repair performed by 41 course participants at a university in Southeast Asia. Even though the data were elicited through the use of "two sets of discuss-the-differences tasks designed to encourage the use of polysyllabic words" (Lewis & Deterding, 2022, p. 108) instead of occurring naturally, the results shed some light on the types of nonunderstanding that warrant making an appeal for other-repair. Specifically, Lewis and Deterding's analysis focused on misunderstandings that had occurred due to idiosyncratic pronunciation, and they identified 31 examples of other-initiated repair. The data allowed the researchers to arrange the different types of other-repair into eight groups. Candidate replacement was the most frequent form of other-repair. The phenomenon is exemplified by an interaction in which the first speaker pronounced the word "stores" as /stɑːs/, which proved incomprehensible and prompted the hearer (i.e., the

subsequent speaker) to suggest "straw" (i.e., /strɔː/) as an alternative; upon realising that their pronunciation had been misunderstood, the first speaker made the necessary repair and uttered the word as /stɔːr/ (p. 112). The participants in Lewis and Deterding's study also initiated other-repair by asking direct questions (e.g., "what do you mean the BOWLing guy?", p. 113), by repeating the segments—either partially or in full—that they had not understood with rising intonation (e.g., "balloons?", p. 114), and by making open or indirect requests (e.g., "sorry?", p. 116) for repair. In response to the repair requests, the participants whose speech had cased comprehension difficulty typically altered the pronunciation or the grammar of the problematic segments, provided additional information to help their interlocutors understand what they had meant, or accepted the candidate replacements offered to them. Because investigations on ELF pragmatics have generally shown self-repair to be a common feature of talk and other-repair to be virtually nonexistent, Lewis and Deterding's research provides important proof that speakers in ELF contexts do occasionally perform other-repair as well.

2.3.2.3 CA: Problems Occurring in ELF Communication

Although the majority of empirical research on ELF interactions has concentrated on communicative success and on the ease with which interactants in ELF settings make themselves understood, problems that may hinder communication have also been investigated in a few studies (e.g., Björkman, 2013; Knapp, 2011; Pietikäinen, 2018). Having said that, research on communication problems usually also focuses on the interactional work which allows speakers to overcome difficulty; thus, findings on problems that language users encounter in ELF contexts are usually presented in the context of communication strategies.

An example of such research is Pietikäinen's (2018) study, in which misunderstandings in ELF communication between international couples who used English as their shared language of interaction were examined along with the techniques employed by the participants to ensure understanding. The data consisted of recordings of private conversations between the couples, and although the speech events were personal (i.e., rather than institutional) and, thus, distinct from academic contexts of ELF communication, the findings appear to provide valuable insights into ELF pragmatics at large. In total, 46 misunderstandings were identified, and it was found that "most misunderstandings in ELF couples' conversations (40 occasions) seem to have arisen from the general vagueness of the speaker's utterances, which then resulted in the hearer drawing misinformed assumptions" (Pietikäinen, 2018, p. 200). A source of communication difficulty

that frequently gave rise to misunderstandings was what Pietikäinen referred to as "reference/framing confusion" (p. 200), which essentially appears to have concerned the participants' schemata: When a speaker failed to provide their interlocutor with the appropriate cues for the selection of the relevant background knowledge with reference to which the ensuing conversation was to be interpreted, the hearer did not understand the speaker's intended meaning. Notably, there were six misunderstandings in the data which proved inexplicable and uncategorisable because "there were no clear indicators of what had led to the situation" (Pietikäinen, 2018, pp. 200–201). There must have been a reason, but it was not apparent to the researcher, which highlights the limitations of empirical research particularly in cases when the analysis is etic: It is conceivable that Pietikäinen could have discovered the root of the problems in some of those six cases if she had enquired into the participants' emic perspectives. Further justification for the inclusion of emic data in research on ELF pragmatics derives from Pietikäinen's observation that the extent of speakers' familiarity with one another ought to be considered a major factor in the analysis of interactional data; however, such information is not always readily recoverable from the context of a single speech event; in other words, analysts do not know what participants know about each other. Therefore, input from those whose conversations are analysed is likely to contribute to a more accurate understanding of the phenomena under investigation by providing analysts with some insight into speakers' schematic knowledge.

In addition to pragmatic considerations such as the amount of shared knowledge between interlocutors in a given setting and interactants' assessments of the degree of specificity required for successful communication, the idiosyncrasies of speakers' English usage can also be an impediment to successful communication in ELF interactions. Findings to this effect were reported by Björkman (2013), who studied linguistic form and its communicative effectiveness in an academic ELF context in Sweden. Björkman's objective was to "investigate the nature of ELF usage" (p. 62) with analytical foci that included the morphosyntactic features of nonstandard usage observed in her context as well as the potential problems of communication that speakers may face as a result of nonstandard usage. Even though there were examples of nonstandard usage in the data, it was found that nonconformity to the conventions of Standard English had rarely caused disturbance in the interactions subjected to analysis. Interestingly, "among all the forms analyzed closely, only non-standard formulation of questions resulted in

overt disturbance in communication" (Björkman, 2013, p. 112). In order to determine what it was that had caused disturbance in the formulation of nonstandard questions, Björkman broadened the scope of the analysis to include phonological features in addition to syntactic ones. The results pointed towards rising intonation as a possible indicator of interrogative intentions irrespective of word order. When intonation proved insufficient to help hearers recognise speakers' communicative intentions (i.e., asking questions), disturbance was typically "caused by extra-linguistic issues such as issues related to content" (Björkman, 2013, p. 136). Even in some of these cases, however, the participants were able to identify utterances as questions based on other types of contextual information at their disposal. On the basis of the finding that only nonstandard questions (i.e., no other nonstandard feature) had caused disturbance in the data analysed, Björkman suggested that questions in general provide instantaneous feedback on hearers' comprehension, that is, a response may indicate whether the previous utterance was interpreted as a question or not. In this respect, questions seem to differ from other types of utterances (e.g., declarative sentences) given that the responses required by questions bear signs of hearers' interpretations.

Besides communication problems that affect comprehension, ELF interactions may be beset with issues that pertain to appropriateness. The pragmatic norms of ELF communication—including aspects of appropriateness—were researched by Knapp (2011), who studied the management of conflict in an academic context in Germany where speakers from 13 different countries participated in a lecture discussion. The analysis was based on a dialogic segment of the lecture in which conflict arose following the lecturer's suggestion that a student be retributively excluded from a project and, by extension, be deprived of the opportunity to earn a mark for coursework; the lecturer, then, invited the student to make a case for escaping punishment in front of the whole group. The student's bid to exonerate himself was unsuccessful. Knapp identified a range of factors that had contributed to the communication problems experienced by the parties during the exchange including intercultural issues, differences between the participants' roles within the institution, and spatiotemporal aspects of discourse. In addition to these, issues of appropriateness surfaced in terms of the realisation of speech acts. Despite a high number of explicit performatives (e.g., verbs such as "agree", "ask", "convince", "defend", "discuss", "explain", "warn", etc.) found in the speech event, the participants operated on "diverging assumptions with regard to pragmatically adequate verbal actions" (Knapp, 2011,

p. 985), which resulted in the student's failure to comply with the lecturer's request. The analysis also highlighted issues of politeness as it was noted that neither the lecturer nor the other students present had made "attempts at mitigating the face threat that the whole situation and the speech acts of criticism and reproach" (Knapp, 2011, p. 986) meant for the student who had been put on the spot. Thus, the speakers in this ELF context were found to have conveyed pragmatic meaning successfully but inappropriately (i.e., impolitely). Concerning the research methodology with which the results were obtained, Knapp stated that the validity of the findings could have been increased if "post-event interviews, in which … the participants would be questioned about their intentions and their constructions of meaning" (p. 988) had been conducted. This prompted Knapp to recommend that methods which allow the collection of introspective data be developed and adopted in future studies aimed at the exploration of ELF pragmatics.

2.3.3 *Emic Orientation in ELF Research*

As the overview of research findings on ELF pragmatics has so far shown, empirical analyses of ELF communication tend to be etic in that they are conducted by investigators who look upon their data from an external observer's perspective as they are neither participants in speech events nor privy to participants' emic views. Nevertheless, awareness of the need to incorporate emic data into ELF research has been growing as demonstrated by Knapp's (2011) suggestion above and by a few studies in which attempts were made at the exploration of speakers' emic perspectives. An example of the latter is Smit's (2010) research, which was carried out with the aim of providing "a qualitative, applied linguistic description of discourse-pragmatic patterns of classroom interaction" (p. 11) in an ELF context. Accordingly, Smit analysed interactional data obtained longitudinally through the observation and recording of 126 lessons as well as emic data, which were "mainly taken from interviews, and two open-ended questionnaires" (Smit, 2010, p. 97). Furthermore, Smit conversed with the participants between lessons informally, which contributed to the development of her understanding of their emic perspectives. The emic orientation adopted by the researcher influenced, for instance, the manner in which the participants were categorised: Smit divided the adult students into four age groups based on their own perceptions of the age difference between them. In terms of the overall findings, emic information enhanced Smit's understanding of the interactional data by providing insight into the dynamics of interpersonal relations between the participants and by revealing some attitudes students had towards language use in the ELF context studied (e.g., concerning

their English language skills and the need to use English for communication and studying). Although the emic data used by Smit were not lesson-specific, the findings appear to have been enriched and made more dependable by the inclusion of emic views in the analysis.

The importance of emic perspectives on interactional phenomena was emphasised also by Pietikäinen (2020), who set out specifically to study emic orientations to language in ELF dialogues by exploring what it was that speakers foregrounded in the course of interaction. The data analysed consisted of 3 hours of conversation between six international couples who used English as their shared language of communication. Pietikäinen's "analysis of sequential orientations found very little orientation to language overall" (p. 141). What happened instead was that the participants engaged typically in domestic activities such as having breakfast or preparing for a dinner party, and it was their orientation to whatever task they happened to be performing that took precedence and determined the sequence of talk. This, then, appears to be a major difference between speakers' emic experience of using language for their own purposes and researchers' etic orientation to linguistic data, which is likely to be characterised by a much narrower focus on language. Despite the apparent lack of orientation to language issues on the part of the participants, linguistic performance was sometimes repaired. Even though instances of both self-repair and other-repair were identified in the data, "the object of repair was uncommonly language and hardly ever aspects of the English language" (Pietikäinen, 2020, p. 143). Repair was necessitated more frequently by the content of what was said (e.g., factual inaccuracies) than by the form in which a given message was put (i.e., aspects of usage). Thus, Pietikäinen concluded that etic and emic perspectives on the speech events analysed differed markedly in that the participants seemed to take little notice of interactional matters (e.g., nonstandard usage, code-mixing, hesitant speech, etc.) which may have been considered relevant and carefully examined by researchers. However, it is to be noted that the emic perspectives in this study were explored by means to which Pietikäinen referred as "participant orientation analysis" (p. 148) carried out with reliance "on the emic principles of CA" (p. 148). In other words, the emic perspectives were extracted from the interactional data based exclusively on the researcher's analysis. As such, the research methodology appears to have imposed some constraints on the extent to which the findings can represent the participants' emic views.

The emic perspectives of language users were researched also by Komori-Glatz (2017) in an extensive study aimed at the investigation of how English is used by students who engage in

multicultural teamwork. ELF interaction was examined in the academic context of a university in Austria, though Komori-Glatz described her research focus as business English as a lingua franca (BELF) owing to the fact that the students specialised in business, thereby making it a context of business communication. Nevertheless, the use of English—similarly to any other ELF context—was necessitated by the fact that the participants spoke different first languages (i.e., Austrian students worked in teams with international students). Komori-Glatz's analysis relied on data obtained from numerous sources including video recordings of speech events and retrospective interviews in which the participants' experiences were explored. The emic data yielded findings belonging to three main categories. Firstly, the insights gained into the participants' emic perspectives allowed Komori-Glatz to develop an in-depth understanding of the students and their identities as language users (i.e., how they thought of their own linguistic practices). Secondly, the researcher was able to penetrate the students' perceptions of what it meant for them to use English in their professional and academic contexts of communication (including, e.g., their views on the unavoidability of speaking English or the difficulties caused by switching between languages in different settings). Thirdly, Komori-Glatz analysed students' conceptualisations of success with regard to teamwork, and the participants were found to consider effective communication along with "understanding the business content and developing good relationships with their colleagues" (p. 100) to be essential for successful teamwork. Despite Komori-Glatz's acquaintance with the students' beliefs and perspectives, emic data were arguably underutilised in the sense that only the first research question—which concerned the views held by the speakers—was answered with reliance on the participants' introspective input. However, the second research question—aimed at the description of what the participants did in the actual practice of ELF communication—was answered based on "a sociocultural discourse-pragmatic analysis" (pp. 54–68) of interactional data, that is, the findings were the result of a predominantly etic style of analysis. Komori-Glatz justified the decision with reference to "practical restrictions of what was 'doable' for the researcher" (p. 65). Nonetheless, these limitations appear to leave room for research that incorporates emic perspectives into the analysis of interactional data to be conducted.

The exploration of language users' emic perspectives was also among the objectives of Kalocsai's (2014) research, which concentrated on ELF in a community of practice comprised of international students at a university in Hungary. More specifically, the research project was

undertaken to "show how the use of ELF intersects with the speakers' activities, views, beliefs and attitudes within a locally based community" (Kalocsai, 2014, p. 8). Therefore, the study, which included a total of 142 participants, necessitated the adoption of an ethnographically oriented methodology. To understand the role of ELF within the community of practice, Kalocsai became a participant observer and collected several forms of data, which were obtained from various sources including naturally occurring interactions, numerous kinds of online communication (e.g., emails and social media posts), and by means of conducting five different types of interviews (i.e., ethnographic, interactional, retrospective, casual, and semistructured, p. 63). During the retrospective interviews, the participants listened to recordings of conversations in which they had been involved, and Kalocsai asked them to comment on segments of interest. However, these interviews do not appear to have been a supplement to conversation analytical findings on ELF interactions given that "the retrospective interview transcripts … were analyzed for the students' views, beliefs and attitudes on their linguistic practices, and *not* for their intentions" (Kalocsai, 2014, p. 73). Thus, a part of Kalocsai's research was conducted with an ethnographic focus on the social engagement that characterised the students' community of practice, which had little to do with language (e.g., the consumption of alcohol or sightseeing). In spite of being principally ethnographic, Kalocsai's analysis produced findings that cast light on the students' linguistic practices concerning aspects such as the creation of a community of practice through the use of English (pp. 101–138), the use of humour in ELF interactions (pp. 139–170), and the strategies used by the participants to improve comprehension and self-confidence in ELF communication (pp. 171–199). Nevertheless, the analysis of interactional data seems to have been unaided by emic input on specific segments of talk; therefore, the findings of interactional analysis may be seen as representative of Kalocsai's etic perspective, albeit informed by her familiarity with the participants' beliefs and shared experiences.

In summary, empirical research findings on the characteristics of ELF communication in primarily educational contexts have been reviewed in this section. It has been shown that the use of ELF has been investigated widely and via various research methods. Researchers who have drawn on corpora have been able to describe features of lexicogrammar observed in contexts of ELF interaction as well as strategies on which interactants in these situations have been found to rely in order to achieve their communicative goals. Scholars who have employed conversation analytical methods in the study of ELF have, in a similar vein, identified a number of

communication strategies that speakers in ELF settings have made use of in the course of interaction with others. On the whole, results of empirical enquiries indicate that communication problems experienced by interactants in the multilingual and multicultural contexts of ELF communication are almost never insurmountable. Furthermore, language users in ELF situations tend to strive for explicitness and communicative efficiency whilst being supportive of one another. Research has also been undertaken with a view to developing a participant-oriented understanding of ELF communication and its attendant characteristics. The need to improve the analysis of interactional phenomena has spurred researchers to adopt longitudinal and ethnographic research methods in the hope of producing more accurate and comprehensive interpretations of data than what is permitted by methods such as CA or discourse analysis. Insights into language users' emic perspectives have generally been gained by researchers through prolonged engagement with their research participants. However, it can be argued that ethnographic research endeavours aimed at the exploration of language users' emic perspectives have yielded limited results in terms of their contributions to analysts' understanding of interactional data. Indeed, emic input seems to have enabled researchers to describe contexts of communication from emic perspectives in broad terms, but such efforts cannot be equated with genuinely emic analyses of interactional data. Therefore, the lack of empirical studies that examine specific speech situations through speakers' emic perspectives seems to create a niche for research which utilises emic data in the analysis of ELF communication. It is the accomplishment of this objective that was endeavoured in the present study, whose research methodology is described in the following chapter.

3 Research Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to "provide enough information to allow readers to understand how the data were collected and evaluated" (American Psychological Association, 2020, p. 372) in the empirical investigation that was conducted as part of the present thesis. Accordingly, the chapter begins with the presentation of the research questions as those were the primary source of guidance on the actions taken subsequently. Thereafter, an overview of the research methods is provided.

3.1 Research Questions

In an attempt to fill the research niche outlined in the Theoretical Background, empirical research in which the researcher's pragmatic analysis of ELF communication was supplemented with emic input from the research participants was conducted. To guide the current enquiry, the following research questions were formulated:

1) From the researcher's etic perspective, what features of language use and interaction emerge as salient in contexts of ELF communication between international students at a university in Hungary?

2) From the participants' emic perspectives, what features of language use and interaction emerge as salient in contexts of ELF communication between international students at a university in Hungary?

3) What differences are there between the researcher's etic and the participants' emic perspectives, and what implications do the differences have for empirical research on ELF pragmatics and for language pedagogy?

3.2 Research Design

The research foci place this study within the qualitative research paradigm (Dörnyei, 2007) given that it has the analysis of linguistic data with a view to exploring individuals' perspectives as its chief objective. In terms of style, this research project bears the hallmarks of naturalistic and ethnographic enquiry. According to Cohen et al. (2007), this type of research, besides having other characteristics, tends to focus on participants' multiple realities in specific situations, treat meaning as context-dependent and socially constructed, be influenced by researchers' value judgements, and take "all factors, rather than a limited number of variables, … into account" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 168). Despite fitting into the broad category of qualitative research and within that into the somewhat narrower subdivision of naturalistic and ethnographic

enquiry, the research design implemented in this study is unique in that some elements of it do not appear to have been used before. The development of the research methods described below is a contribution to ELF pragmatics that was required by the specific focus of this study; at the same time, however, methodological innovation is also a necessity if the frontiers of (social) science are to be pushed back. In this respect, heed was paid to the suggestion made by Pitzl (2022), who argued that a methodological shift was essential for the complexity of ELF communication to be understood and urged pragmaticians "to devise methodologies that allow us to uncover and describe in empirical detail the situational and group-specific emergence of transcultural norms and pragmatic conventions in real-time interaction" (p. 64).

Because of the analytical foci defined by the research questions, it was necessary to incorporate two types of data into the research: It is through a research design which utilised a combination of emic data and interactional data that better understanding of the situation-specific pragmatic practices was expected to be developed. With regard to the interactional data, a criterion which also had to be satisfied was that the ELF data had to be comprised of naturally occurring conversations as otherwise the authenticity of the language use of the participants could have been called into question. Although researchers in pragmatics routinely make use of elicitation techniques such as roleplay tasks or discourse completion tests to collect spoken data (e.g., Dombi, 2020; Ogiermann, 2018; Taguchi, 2022), such investigations usually concentrate on narrowly defined pragmatic phenomena (e.g., realisations of specific speech acts); consequently, the use of elicited interactional data would not have been suitable for the purpose of conducting exploratory research. Instead, a conscious decision was made to analyse only naturally occurring ELF interactions. Therefore, no instrument was used for the collection of interactional data.

As mentioned above, it was the exploration of the participants' emic perspectives that made the present investigation different from other studies on ELF pragmatics. In order for participant relevance to be uncovered, input directly from the research participants had to be obtained and integrated into the analysis as the researcher's attempts at understanding—by default—represent an etic view of interactional data. Thus, a method of data collection which would provide insights into the participants' perspectives was sought, and stimulated recall was deemed suitable for the elicitation of emic information from the interactants. As Ryan and Gass (2012) explained, stimulated recall "is a method used to elicit qualitative data relating to the

thought processes associated with performing an action or participating in an event" (p. 145). The crux of the method lies in the stimulus (i.e., recorded material aimed at reviving memories of past events), upon which participants are requested to comment. Used in several exploratory and ethnographically focused studies (e.g., Borg, 1998; Cuyvers et al., 2022; Dempsey, 2010; Nguyen et al., 2013; Westerman, 1991; Zainil & Arsyad, 2021), stimulated recall as a data collection technique has been demonstrated to be capable of yielding insights into emic perspectives. Despite its widespread application in ethnographic research, however, stimulated recall appears to have thus far been underutilised in research on pragmatics: In an overview of the use of this data elicitation method, Sanchez and Grimshaw (2020) analysed 88 empirical research papers and found that "most of the studies were in the areas of second/foreign/additional language education" (p. 314). As such, the use of stimulated recall in the present study constitutes an innovative attempt at data collection and analysis within the domain of ELF pragmatics. Moreover, the adoption of stimulated recall can be seen as an effort to satisfy the need—outlined by Pitzl (2022)—for the development of methods that enable researchers to produce empirical descriptions of pragmatic practices in contexts of ELF communication.

In terms of the data used, then, the design of this study can be labelled as multimethod research, which Jenkins (2014) described as research that "involves the use of different methods within qualitative or quantitative" (p. 73) paradigms of enquiry. This empirical investigation— whose design is summarised in Table 3 below—is a multimethod study in that its exploratory objectives necessitated the use of a combination of different types of qualitative data. First, naturally occurring interactional data were collected to allow the researcher to analyse aspects of language use in contexts of ELF communication. Without additional input, however, the pragmatic analysis of conversational data can be based only on the analyst's etic understanding of interactional phenomena; consequently, such analytical efforts on their own would be insufficient for shedding light on what participants regard as salient in the process of their engagement in ELF interactions. Therefore, an additional method of data collection—stimulated recall—was used to obtain emic input from the research participants on the interactional data. The data analysis was then conducted with reliance on the researcher's etic interpretation of the linguistic data as well as on the participants' emic views on their conversations. It is the improved understanding of linguistic and interactional phenomena brought about by the juxtaposition of these different perspectives that makes the results of the present study a unique

contribution to applied linguistic enquiry on ELF pragmatics. In what follows, the context in which the research was carried out is described along with the specific procedures that were followed in the collection and in the analysis of the data.

Table 3

Summary of Research Questions and Methods of Data Collection and Data Analysis

Research Question	Data Collected and Methods of Collection	Methods of Data Analysis
1) From the researcher's etic perspective, what features of language use and interaction emerge as salient in contexts of ELF communication between international students at a university in Hungary?	Interactional data collected by means of recording 20 naturally occurring ELF conversations	Pragmatic analyses of the interactional data (both extensive and intensive)
2) From the participants' emic perspectives, what features of language use and interaction emerge as salient in contexts of ELF communication between international students at a university in Hungary?	Emic data collected by means of conducting 30 stimulated-recall interviews with the participants	Inductive content analysis of the emic data
3) What differences are there between the researcher's etic and the participants' emic perspectives, and what implications do the differences have for empirical research on ELF pragmatics and for language pedagogy?	Interactional data and emic data	Juxtaposition of the perspectives through a comparison of the results of the analyses

3.3 Research Context

The empirical investigation whose results are reported in the present thesis was conducted at a university in Hungary. The institution, which offers degree courses both at undergraduate and at postgraduate levels in a wide range of academic disciplines, has a sizeable student body. In addition to having a strong research profile, the university boasts a large number of international students, who are enrolled at all levels but particularly in postgraduate courses. To facilitate the internationalisation of its student population, the university offers courses of

study in English in addition to Hungarian, which is the default language of instruction. Thus, English-medium instruction is provided by the university for one of two reasons: Lectures and seminars may be delivered in English either because they are intended primarily for international students or because of discipline-specific reasons (e.g., modules in English Studies are naturally taught in English). In recent years, the use of English at the university has intensified due to an increase in the number of international students, who typically participate in lessons together with Hungarian home students. Although the precise number of international students who study at the university is not disclosed, one of the faculties of the university states on its website that its student population includes hundreds of international students who come from over 50 countries. The international composition of groups of students in these classroom settings gives rise to ELF communication par excellence owing to the fact that few international students speak the local language (i.e., Hungarian) upon enrolment; therefore, English is not only the language in which they are educated, but it is also often their only means of interaction with their lecturers and fellow students.

The specific context in which this research project was undertaken was a module within a postgraduate degree course at the university. The module, whose language of instruction was English, belonged to the discipline of education, though no further details can be provided lest the module be identifiable. In terms of its format, the module was a seminar, and the students attending it were required to participate in discussions once a week (i.e., attendance was compulsory). The duration of each session was 90 minutes. The lessons would typically follow the same pattern: Each seminar would be dedicated to a particular aspect of the broader focus of the module, and set texts would be assigned for every lesson by the teacher. The students were required to familiarise themselves with the readings in preparation for the seminar discussions. During the seminars, the teacher would usually lead whole-group discussions up to a point and then request the students to form smaller groups and to discuss questions based on the set texts. Due to the number of participants ($N = 10$), the students would typically be divided into two groups of five for the speaking tasks. Apart from having to comply with general instructions for the discussion tasks (e.g., which texts to discuss), the students would be at liberty to say what they wished during their small-group conversations, that is, the group discussions generated naturally occurring speech. Following the small-group discussions, the students of both smaller groups would be reunited in a large group and be joined by the teacher for the remainder of the

lessons. A circumstance which must be mentioned on account of its influence on the proceedings is the fact that every seminar of the module was held online. Ordinarily, the seminars would have taken place in a physical classroom; however, at the time of the data collection, safety measures that were necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the university from providing in-person education. Consequently, the university designated the software application Microsoft Teams to be its official channel of online communication, which meant that this module was conducted in its entirety via Microsoft Teams in what can be described as an online classroom. During the discussion tasks, the smaller groups were placed by the teacher into so-called "breakout rooms", which were temporary channels of discussion created especially for groupwork.

3.4 Research Participants

In total, 10 students participated in this study. They were all postgraduate students and participants in the module described above. Out of the 10 participants, seven were female, and three were male. At the time of their participation in the research, the students, on average, were 32 years of age ($M = 32.1$, $SD = 6.8$). In terms of their first-language backgrounds, the participants comprised a heterogeneous group: The 10 students spoke nine different first languages, which included Arabic, Burmese, English, Hungarian, Kurdish, Mongolian, Persian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Spanish was the only language spoken by more than one participant ($n = 2$) as a first language. As the list of first languages shows, there was a native speaker of English amongst the students; everyone else ($n = 9$) spoke English as an additional language. The majority of the students ($n = 7$) indicated that they were proficient users of English based on the CEFR proficiency bands (Council of Europe, 2020): Four participants estimated their English skills to be around the C1 level, whereas three students stated that their English language proficiency corresponded to the C2 level. There were, however, two students who classed themselves as independent users of English rather than proficient ones: They both judged their command of English to be around the B2 level. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the information on the students' English skills was given based on self-assessment. The average age at which the participants ($n = 9$) started learning English was 11 years ($M = 10.8$, $SD = 4.4$). In addition to speaking English and their first languages, the students claimed to possess varying levels of proficiency in 11 further languages, making them a truly multilingual group.

3.5 Data Collection

The collection of the data analysed can be regarded as an instance of purposive sampling (Dörnyei, 2007) in the sense that the participants were not randomly selected; instead, they had to satisfy a set of criteria, which aligned with the purposes of this study: In order to qualify for inclusion in the research, the participants had to be a group of international students who did not share the same first language and therefore used English as their lingua franca for communication in classroom settings. This requirement was eminently fulfilled by the aforedescribed group of students. At the same time, however, it must be acknowledged that the selection of the sample was based also on considerations other than the language backgrounds of the speakers. The researcher happened to have access to this particular set of students through the teacher of the group, which is to say that convenience sampling (Cohen et al., 2007) was also at play. Thus, the participants can be accurately described as a purposive convenience sample: They were characterised by linguistic attributes that were desirable for the achievement of the purposes of this investigation, and they were readily accessible to the researcher.

As mentioned above, two types of data were collected: interactional data and emic data. The collection of the interactional data did not require an instrument as only naturally occurring spoken data were sought for subsequent analysis. Thus, the discussions which the students had in smaller groups during their seminars were recorded without any elicitation by the researcher. The students would usually record their own discussions at the researcher's request using the inbuilt recording function of Microsoft Teams. Before discussion tasks, the teacher of the group would remind the students to record their conversations for research purposes. At the beginning of the breakout room sessions, one student in each discussion group would have to start recording the discussion manually, and this would produce a video recording of the entire groupwork session. When a group discussion was being recorded, Microsoft Teams notified the participants of this by indicating on the screen that the recording had started. Both the teacher and the researcher were online at the time of these discussions, and they would occasionally enter the breakout rooms for silent observation, but neither of them participated in the groupwork tasks in any way. As small-group discussions were a regular feature of the seminars, interactional data were collected with the same regularity (i.e., whenever such a discussion took place). The collection of interactional data spanned a period of 56 days, and breakout room conversations were recorded on eight separate occasions. In total, 20 discussions were recorded. The combined length of the

20 recordings is 267 minutes, which is approximately 4.4 hours of video data. In addition to the videos, field notes were also taken on the interactions; however, the video recordings enabled the researcher to watch and rewatch the discussions as many times as necessary, which rendered the field notes less important than they might have been without video recordings.

The emic data were collected by means of conducting retrospective stimulated-recall interviews (SRIs) with the participants. After each seminar discussion, every student was requested to participate in an SRI in order to share their recollections of what had happened during the conversations. In this phase of the data collection, the interactional data collected earlier became the stimuli. It was hoped that the act of viewing the video recordings would stimulate the students' powers of recollection and enable them to recount what had happened during the discussions and how they had perceived the proceedings. Thus, the researcher made use of Microsoft Teams to have meetings with the participants individually and to show them recordings of their discussions. The students were encouraged to stop the video stimulus (i.e., to ask the researcher to do so by calling out "stop") whenever they had something to share in connection with the discussions. In some cases, the researcher asked the students facilitative questions about the conversations such as how they had felt about the participation of their fellow students or why they had behaved in particular ways; however, such questions were asked with the aim of elicitation only when the participants were reluctant to talk. In general, questions were asked sparingly, and the SRIs were characterised by an open-ended approach because the purpose of these interviews was the discovery of participant relevance rather than the imposition of the researcher's etic views on the conversations. Attempts were made to implement the methodological recommendations that Ryan and Gass (2012) put forward by keeping the amount of time that would elapse between the lessons in which the interactions took place and the follow-up SRI sessions to a minimum. Despite these efforts, the students were not always available for SRIs immediately after the lessons. The SRI data collection happened over a period of 39 days, and SRI data were collected on 19 separate days. In total, 30 SRIs were conducted and video recorded. The combined length of the 30 SRIs is 1,121 minutes, which is approximately 18.6 hours of video data.

An issue which needed to be considered in relation to the data collection procedures pertained to the effects of what Labov (1972) called the observer's paradox. Because the collection of emic data was being conducted over a period during which lessons were also held,

it was possible for the participants to become conscious of their classroom behaviour and language use as a result of regularly sharing their recollections with the researcher. There were, indeed, stimulated-recall interviews in which some of the students mentioned having been influenced by their participation in the study; in the spirit of transparency, reference to these disclosures was normally included in the emic sections of the analyses. Although instances in which the students explicitly described how their extended participation in the study had influenced their behaviour during the discussions were few and far between, it seemed that the observation had, in fact, improved the quality of the data. Those students who were conscious of being observed reported having been more attentive during the group discussions than they might otherwise have been because they were aware of the need to recount the proceedings subsequently.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

As the empirical investigation was conducted with human participants, the minimisation of the likelihood that the participants would be negatively affected by their involvement in this study was an important consideration throughout the research project. The measures that were taken to shield the participants from detriment can be divided into three stages relative to the data collection procedures: before, during, and after the data collection. As a first step, the university's Research Ethics Approval, which is written authorisation from the Research Ethics Committee to carry out the investigation, was sought and secured for this study. However, the data collection did not commence until the students had explicitly consented to participate in the research. Because it is imperative that participation be based on informed consent (Dörnyei, 2007), the students were provided with a detailed explanation of what their involvement in this research project would entail. In addition to being guaranteed anonymity, the participants were told that they did not have to partake in the research unless they felt inclined to do so. The students were then requested to state—in writing—whether they would participate in the study entirely of their own volition. To facilitate the process, a statement of consent (see Appendix A) was drawn up by the researcher and sent to the students, who were asked to return it via email if they agreed to participate in the study. Without exception, every student granted consent to the researcher, thereby enabling the empirical investigation to be carried out. During the data collection, the students had the right to terminate their participation in the research without having to explain the reason for their withdrawal. Furthermore, the participants were entitled to

ask the researcher to refrain from including specific utterances of theirs in the analysis. Nonetheless, none of the students decided to exercise either of these rights at any point during the data collection. Once the data had been collected, every effort was made to fulfil the promise made to the participants by guarding their identities. Consequently, the students were anonymised in the research report: Numerical identifiers were assigned to each participant and used throughout the thesis instead of their names. Moreover, the institution where the data were collected is not named, and the year of the data collection is not specified.

3.7 Data Analysis

Before the analysis of the data began in earnest, the data had to be transcribed. Transcription is considered to be the first stage of the process of analysing qualitative data (Bailey, 2008) given that the act of writing down spoken words requires some interpretation. An exploration of the methods that could be utilised for transcription indicated that written records of the data would be possible to produce in one of three ways: The first option was for the researcher to transcribe the data manually. The second option would involve engaging the services of professional transcribers, whereas the third option would be to use transcription software to produce transcripts. When the options for producing transcripts were considered, the four main factors that influenced the choice of transcription method were the following: the volume of the data to be transcribed, the amount of time that the transcription would be likely to require, the expenses incurred, and the accuracy of the transcripts produced. After due consideration (which included trials of various transcription software), it was decided that the two types of data would not be transcribed in the same way.

In the case of the interactional data (i.e., the groupwork sessions), transcription software appeared to be capable of producing sufficiently accurate transcripts of the spoken data. Therefore, the automated speech-to-text service offered by a company called Rev was used to transcribe the 20 recordings. The length of a single transcript was approximately 1,900 words ($M = 1,892$, $SD = 566$) on average, and the 20 transcripts combined amounted to 37,841 words. By contrast, machine transcription was not possible in the case of the emic data (i.e., the SRIs) because those recordings had to be transcribed selectively: The SRIs included the participants' emic views on speech events as well as the speech events themselves (i.e., the stimuli were played to the participants and thus captured on video along with the comments made on the interactions), and only the segments in which emic views were expressed needed to be

transcribed. For this reason, the SRIs were transcribed manually by the researcher in a selective fashion; in fact, these transcripts can be described more accurately as notes that included detailed information on each instance in which the participants had commented on the stimuli and on what they had said. In total, 26 transcripts of SRIs were produced, and the combined length of the transcripts came to 31,497 words, with an average length of about 1,200 words for a single transcript ($M = 1,211$, $SD = 410$). It was not essential to record every word in the transcripts because the analysis was based primarily on the original video data. The written records of the data were used only to aid the analysis, for example, by making the data more easily searchable.

Following the transcription, the data analysis was carried out with the adoption of what Björkman (2011) had described as a "two-pronged" (p. 953) approach: The data were analysed first extensively and then intensively with the aim of producing findings that would enable "the study both to outline general practices in the form dimension and to give in-depth information at the level of pragmatics" (Björkman, 2011, p. 953). As such, the entire amount of the interactional data was coded as part of the extensive analysis. As Dörnyei (2007) explained, coding is frequently utilised in the analysis of qualitative data, and the method consists in tagging segments of the data with "short textual labels" that "are usually not determined a priori but are left open and flexible" (p. 17). The coding was carried out by the researcher manually using ATLAS.ti Web, which is an online software application designed specifically for qualitative data analysis. The transcripts of the interactional data (i.e., the 20 recordings of groupwork discussions) were entered into ATLAS.ti Web, for it accepts only textual data. However, the coding was based on the video data rather than on the written transcripts: Whilst watching the videos (and often rewatching sections for better understanding), the researcher added codes to the transcripts. This is an important point to note because it became evident soon after the coding had commenced that the video recordings constituted an incomparably richer record of the discussions than the written transcripts of the same data did. Therefore, all analytical judgements in the process of coding were made on the basis of what was observable in the video recordings. The codes attached to the data were influenced by and sometimes adopted from the research literature, but in vivo coding (Saldaña, 2009)—which involves fashioning codes out of participants' words—was also used when such descriptors were deemed more appropriate. The coding of the data was followed by a detailed analysis and categorisation of the codes, which resulted in a taxonomy of the features of the ELF data. The results of the extensive analysis

represent a predominantly etic view of the data in that they materialised without emic input from the participants. Nevertheless, the researcher's analysis was a deductive endeavour in that pragmatic theories provided the foundation for the formulation of the findings. As suggested by Maton and Chen (2016), a translation device was created to illustrate how the relevant theories of language use were enacted in the process of data analysis. The translation device is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4

A Translation Device for the Theories Utilised in the Etic Analyses

Theory	Focus of analysis	Indicators	Examples from data
Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962)	The relationship between linguistic form and apparent communicative intention	Words in the locution that express the illocutionary force of the utterance (e.g., performative verbs), other semantic content from which the illocutionary force can be surmised, and the perlocutionary effect of utterances	Explicit expression of agreement: "Yeah. Yeah. I agree with you" (Recording 11, 9:32) Clarification request: "So we have to completely explain about the audience in the paper?" (Speech Event 3, 9:00)
The Cooperative Principle (Grice, 1975)	Conversational implicatures expressed through divergence from the maxims of the Cooperative Principle Communication difficulties or breakdowns explained through speakers' observance or nonobservance of the Cooperative Principle	Observance or nonobservance of the maxim of Quality, the maxim of Quantity, the maxim of Relation, and the maxim of Manner	Maxim of Relation: Student 9 sharing a story about Chinese students in response to a similar anecdote shared by Student 4 (Speech Event 4, 9:54) Maxim of Manner: idiosyncratic pronunciation of the word "beard" (Recording 6, 12:12)
Politeness Theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987)	Linguistic manifestations of social relations between speakers	Face-threatening acts (e.g., use of the imperative mood) and the management of such utterances as well as any type of redressive action (e.g., face-saving acts or face threats made off record)	Face threat in the form of a direct question: "[Student 5], so what do you think, [Student 5]?" (Speech Event 2, 10:30) Redressive action catering for the interlocutor's negative face: "Yeah, you can, you can say again,

Theory	Focus of analysis	Indicators	Examples from data
			yeah, if you want to" (Speech Event 2, 0:14)
Metafunctions of Language (Halliday, 1978)	Expression of different types of meaning related to the content of utterances or to the actions taken by linguistic means	The ideational, the interpersonal, and the textual metafunctions of language as reflected in the form and the content of utterances	Some ideational metafunctions: expressions of opinion, uncertainty, personal examples Some interpersonal metafunctions: agreement, apology, laughter

Once the data had been analysed extensively, an intensive analysis of a subset of the interactional data was performed in order to develop in-depth understanding of situation-specific pragmatic phenomena. Out of the 20 group discussions, six speech events were selected for intensive analysis. On the one hand, the selection of the speech events was predetermined by the availability of SRI data: Because the researcher's analysis was to be supplemented with the participants' emic views, only those speech events were analysable in this way that were followed up by SRIs. On the other hand, the scope of the intensive analysis was also influenced by the notion of saturation for want of a better term, though it should be noted that—according to Dörnyei (2007)—saturation is usually a determinant of qualitative sampling rather than of data analysis. Nevertheless, it was felt that the analysis of speech events should be sustained for as long as new insights continued to emerge from the analyses. However, much like data collection, data analysis also "cannot go on for ever" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 111). Therefore, the intensive analysis of speech events was limited to six conversations for reasons of feasibility.

The analysis of each discussion consisted of two main phases. In the first phase, the interactional data were subjected to pragmatic analysis from the researcher's etic perspective. In order for the researcher's analysis to be unbiased by the participants' emic views, the SRIs were not processed until the pragmatic analysis had been completed. The analysis itself, which bore resemblance to what Canagarajah et al. (2020) labelled as "an *Expansive Interactional Analysis*" (p. 503), was both inductive and deductive in its orientation to salience. Given that qualitative data analysis "is primarily inductive" and that "*what is important is not predetermined by the researcher*" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 42), primacy was given to what emerged from the interactional data. At the same time, the analysis was characterised by a deductive element in the sense that it was heavily influenced by the relevant research literature: The theories of language use reviewed above and empirical findings reported by ELF scholars had an impact on what was

considered worthy of interest in this study. In the second phase of the speech event analysis, the interactional data were examined from the participants' perspectives. The change of perspective was achieved through analyses of the students' emic opinions that had been articulated during the SRIs. Each SRI was analysed separately; thereafter, the emic views expressed in relation to a given speech event were juxtaposed, and attempts were made at establishing connections between the students' different perspectives. However, the SRI analysis was a fully inductive endeavour as the students' perspectives were not explored with a view to bringing them into alignment with pragmatic theories or with one another, for that matter. Instead, the aim of the analysis was the discovery of participant relevance—wherever it may lie. Thus, the researcher's and the participants' perspectives were purposely kept separate both during the analysis and in the research report to highlight the differences that exist between them.

3.8 Quality Control

The trustworthiness of the findings was established on the basis of the fulfilment of the four criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985): credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. There are several means by which credibility can be achieved. For instance, member checks are "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314). Moreover, triangulation is among the quality-control methods that contribute to the trustworthiness of research results derived from qualitative data (Holloway & Galvin, 2024). According to Björkman (2014), data triangulation can be performed through "retrospective protocols where the researcher plays the audio or video-recording to the speakers and gets them to explain any strategic moves in the discourse" (p. 129). In the case of this study, then, both member checks and triangulation were carried out by dint of using stimulated recall: The emic input obtained via the SRIs provided insights into the speech events from multiple perspectives and simultaneously allowed the researcher to verify whether his interpretations of the data concurred with those of the participants. The adoption of additional measures to ensure dependability were deemed not to be necessary on account of Lincoln and Guba's assertion that there is "no credibility without dependability" and that "a demonstration of the former is sufficient to establish the latter" (p. 316).

The confirmability of the findings, which may be understood as "a concept to describe the extent to which results can be corroborated by others" (Chung et al., 2020, p. 3300), needed to be established especially in the case of the extensive analysis given that it was performed

without the involvement of the participants. As the codes were created based on a chiefly etic view of the data, the resultant representation was potentially prone to be skewed by the researcher's interpretations in a way that would not be representative of another analyst's view. For this reason, the help of a second coder was enlisted in the process of finalising the codes that formed the basis for the extensive analysis, and joint coding was carried out to ascertain whether the codes that the researcher had attached to the data were adequate descriptors of the linguistic phenomena observed in the discussions under analysis. In total, four conversations were coded jointly by the researcher and by the second coder (i.e., 20% of the dataset). The two coders worked separately with the video data, and their coding was subsequently compared. Although there were differences between the results produced by the independent analyses, the discrepancies were not numerous to begin with and decreased in number as the dual coding progressed (i.e., from 24 at the outset to just nine by the final round). Therefore, it was concluded after four rounds of coding that the system of codes devised by the researcher was fit for purpose, inasmuch as the interpretations expressed through the codes were verified by a second analyst. Aside from the verification of the codes, confirmation of the adequacy of the researcher's pragmatic analysis was also sought. The analytical techniques used in the present thesis were developed in previous studies and subjected to the scrutiny of fellow researchers by means of peer review. The first such paper was Farkas (2020), in which the applicability of pragmatic theories in the analysis of language data was demonstrated. The methods that were devised for pragmatic analysis were then employed in Farkas (2023), which presented multimethod research comprised of the etic analysis of an ELF discussion on the one hand and of an exploration of the discussants' emic perspectives examined through stimulated recall on the other hand. Both research papers found a favourable reception, which indicated that the research methods developed in them were appropriate for the study of ELF interactional data.

The final criterion for trustworthiness is transferability, which tends to be conceptualised as the extent to which qualitative findings obtained in one context may be applicable in another (Dörnyei, 2007; McKay, 2006). However, investigators who conduct qualitative research are likely to find it difficult to form judgements about the applicability of their findings elsewhere due to the heterogeneity of the wide range of settings in which others may wish to apply the results. In fact, it was pointed out by Lincoln and Guba (1985) that researchers ought not to take responsibility for the potential lack of transferability; instead, all they can do is to "provide …

the thick description necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). Therefore, this is the approach which was used in the present study: The research methodology and the results of the analyses in particular were described in sufficient detail for readers to determine whether the findings are transferable. The provision of thick descriptions "inevitably eats up more space" (Howitt, 2016, p. 394) than the presentation of quantitative findings might do. Nonetheless, it was necessary—sometimes even at the expense of concision—to report the findings in rich detail so as to permit assessments of their transferability to be made. In Table 5, an overview of the steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the research findings is presented.

Table 5

Measures Adopted in Fulfilment of Lincoln and Guba's (1985) Trustworthiness Criteria

Credibility	member checks triangulation	through stimulated recall
Dependability	established on the basis of credibility	
Confirmability	of extensive analysis	by means of having a subset of the data coded independently by two coders
	of intensive analyses	by means of subjecting the methods of analysis to peer review in two research papers
Transferability	through a thick description of the research methods and results	

3.9 COVID-19: A Blessing in Disguise

A description of the research methodology employed in the empirical investigation undertaken for the present thesis requires some elaboration on the extent to which the study was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The original research plans, which were devised in early 2019, would have involved the exploration of the pragmatic norms of ELF in two classroom settings at a university (i.e., in a physical building). The research project was designed to feature various types of qualitative data (e.g., lesson observation and interview data), whose collection was going to require extensive interaction on the researcher's part with students and lecturers in both classroom contexts. However, the pandemic gripped the world just as the collection of data was about to get underway. In Hungary, similarly to other countries in Europe, a nationwide lockdown was soon imposed to prevent the spread of the virus, which meant that universities and other educational institutions were legally obligated to suspend the provision of in-person education with immediate effect and continue all academic activities via online channels.

Therefore, the data collection was rendered impossible by the safety measures, and a period of uncertainty ensued. It subsequently transpired that carrying out the research as originally intended would not be feasible under the changed circumstances due mostly to lack of access to participants; consequently, the research design that had been outlined in the research proposal had to be abandoned altogether. It was, thus, with consternation that the researcher returned to the proverbial drawing board to formulate alternative plans for data collection.

With the institution originally selected as the research context unavailable, it was necessary to find another source of data, which, in turn, necessitated further changes. The extent of the alterations is difficult to overstate: Although the pragmatics of ELF remained the general focus of the study, everything else changed. Access to research participants was secured in an entirely new—albeit still educational—context, which required the adjustment of the research questions. Importantly, the methods of data collection also had to be modified substantially in the light of the fact that the research was to be conducted entirely online. Nevertheless, a retrospective assessment of the research methods and results leads one to the conclusion that the changes brought about by the pandemic proved to be something of a boon to this research project rather than a hindrance.

Perhaps the most significant advantage in which the adoption of the new research methods resulted was the enhancement of the quality of the data. Due to their online-only participation, students who provided data for the study did so using their own computers, which meant that each of them was recorded separately via the cameras and microphones of their own devices. Even though there are no recordings from physical classroom contexts to which the data used in this study could be compared, it is obvious that the quality of the online recordings is far superior to anything that the researcher could have recorded in person. Classrooms, after all, are not recording studios, and parallel discussions in a room are unlikely to lend themselves to being recorded in a way that allows subsequent transcription and analysis to be done with ease (see Lichtkoppler, 2007 for a description of this problem in a different context). Fortunately, the quality of the data obtained online was such that audibility issues did not impede the analysis at any point. Furthermore, the fact that the data collection happened online is likely to have countered the effects of the observer's paradox (Labov, 1972) during the group discussions: The participants must have been less conscious of being observed than they would have been if they had all sat together in a room to converse in the presence of an investigator. A third and equally

important benefit gained from the online collection of data was the convenience that it afforded to all parties. Although the participants were most generous with their time when approached for information, they had busy schedules, which sometimes made it difficult to arrange stimulated-recall sessions with them after lessons. Nonetheless, the fact that the data collection was conducted in its entirety via a videotelephony application aided the process as it can be safely assumed that several of the SRIs would not have taken place if the participants had been required to find the extra time to attend a recall session in person.

Despite the advantages that resulted from the use of online data collection methods, there were also some disadvantages that appeared to be unavoidable consequences of the absence of a physical space shared by the researcher and the participants. The first of these is the fact that the data obtained are not as rich as the experience of face-to-face communication. In a sense, this is a characteristic of online communication in general rather than a limitation of the present study; there is less information (i.e., particularly visual information) at the interactants' disposal in an online context than in a physical one; therefore, interlocutors miss some of the contextual information in the same way as researchers do. In practical terms, this means that analysts can focus only on what is displayed on their computer screens. The other disadvantage of the online-only data collection derived from the technical problems which inevitably surface when information technology is relied upon for extended periods. On the whole, the data collection was rarely hindered by the medium of communication, but technical issues that were occasionally encountered included problems that could not have happened in a physical classroom setting such as computer issues at the students' end (e.g., faulty cameras) or the temporary loss of participants due to interruptions in their internet connections. Seldom did these problems prevent the participants from being comprehensible; in sum, the drawbacks that were caused by the technological aspect of the data collection procedures proved to be but minor inconveniences. Thus, it can be concluded that the research project was not afflicted by the forced transition from in-person to online data collection methods as any drawbacks were far outweighed by the unforeseen benefits that the online collection of data provided.

4 Results

The empirical findings to which the analyses of ELF data gave rise are presented and discussed in this chapter. The first main section is devoted to the description of the extensive analysis. The presentation of the results of the extensive analysis is followed by the intensive analyses, wherein the outcomes of the etic and emic analysis of six speech events are set forth.

4.1 Results of the Extensive Analysis

As explained above, the first stage of the empirical investigation was comprised of an extensive analysis of the dataset. The entirety of the interactional data (i.e., 20 classroom discussions) was analysed with the aim of obtaining descriptive information that would enable understanding of the features that characterised ELF communication in the context under analysis to be developed. The process of coding described earlier resulted in 76 different codes, which were attached to 1,098 excerpts of the data (i.e., short extracts from the transcripts). Nevertheless, the total number of features coded was higher than 1,098 as it was common for a single excerpt to be labelled with more than one code; in other words, overlaps between the codes occurred regularly. For instance, the assignment of various codes to the same excerpt was often necessitated by the differences between linguistic form and pragmatic function (e.g., a syntactically interrogative utterance would be coded by default as a question, but it may express the illocutionary force of a request, which would require that the excerpt be coded as having both of those attributes).

Because the objective of the analysis was the description of the interactional data in general terms, the focus was on features that could be characterised as typical of the data. Those features that were identified infrequently in the discussions were deemed atypical and therefore excluded from the analysis; nevertheless, the complete list of the codes is included in Appendix B. The threshold for a feature to be considered typical was set at a minimum incidence of 10; hence, features coded fewer than 10 times were not included in the analysis. As a result, the number of codes that were eligible for analysis decreased from 76 to 36. The segments of the data to which the 36 codes were attached constituted the analytical foci. As per Saldaña's (2009) suggestions, the initial coding was followed by a second cycle, whose purpose was "to develop a sense of categorical, thematic, conceptual, and/or theoretical organization from" (p. 149) the original set of codes. The categorisation resulted in a taxonomy of the features of the data, which is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

A Taxonomy of the Features of the Data

Features of the participants' language production			Features of the interpersonal metafunction of language			Features of the ideational metafunction of language			Features of discourse related to the channel of communication		
Code	*n*	%	Code	*n*	%	Code	*n*	%	Code	*n*	%
repetition	194	21.5	agreement	76	24.3	opinion	78	27.7	moderating discussion	56	52.8
question	145	16	overlap	44	14.1	example (personal)	53	18.8	marker of end of turn	23	21.6
hesitation	104	11.5	response to question	27	8.6	example (general)	38	13.5	comment on technology	17	16
hedging	90	9.9	clarification request	26	8.3	adding an idea to the discussion	36	12.8	leave-taking	10	9.4
searching for words	85	9.4	apology	23	7.3	comment on reading	29	10.3			
self-repair	78	8.6	reference to interlocutor's remark	22	7	uncertainty	24	8.5			
false start	61	6.7	clarification provided	21	6.7	personal feeling	12	4.2			
nonstandard	49	5.4	laughter	19	6	discourse reflexivity	11	3.9			
question tag	45	4.9	expression of thanks	17	5.4						
unfinished sentence	26	2.8	backchannelling	16	5.1						
paraphrase	13	1.4	jointly created utterance	11	3.5						
pronunciation	12	1.3	echo	10	3.2						
N	902			312			281			106	

4.1.1 *Features of the Participants' Language Production*

The first of the four categories into which the features of the data were classified pertains to the participants' use of English, and it includes no fewer than 902 items. In total, 12 features of language production were identified in the data. In descending order of frequency, the features are the following: repetition, questions, hesitation, hedging, searching for words, self-repair, false start, nonstandard usage, question tags, unfinished sentences, paraphrase, and pronunciation. Because all of the data—save for the nonlexical components of communication—materialised as a result of language use, it is worth highlighting that the items labelled with the codes belonging to the language production category were placed within this category owing to the absence of an apparent pragmatic function. For example, false starts were recognised as a feature of the participants' language production, but instances when false starts occurred were not seen either as intentional or as meaningful in a pragmatic sense. In other words, the features of the remaining three categories also materialised through language, but those are characterised by more readily identifiable pragmatic functions from the researcher's etic perspective, whereas the features of language production classified into this category are not.

This distinction, however, can be upheld only if two caveats are added. Firstly, it is to be noted that it was typical for utterances to be assigned more than one code; therefore, segments of the data that comprise the language production category may well have been assigned codes from the other three categories. The overlap between the categories is due to the fact that linguistic form and function were both of interest to the analysis. A syntactically interrogative sentence, for instance, would have automatically been labelled as a question, making it a feature of language production, but the same sentence may also have been assigned other codes if the perceived illocutionary force of the utterance warranted it (e.g., request or discussion moderation). Secondly, it must not be overlooked that the categorisation represents the analyst's etic perspective. What this means in practical terms is that the above-mentioned absence of pragmatic functions (i.e., a criterion for segments of the data to be classified as features of language production) was established only from the researcher's analytical perspective, which may or may not have coincided with the communicative intentions of those who produced the utterances.

With 194 occurrences, repetition was the most frequently identified feature of the participants' language production. Thus, it can be stated that the students' speech was

characterised by repetition. However, repetition was used not only and not predominantly for emphasis. There was considerable variance in what the participants repeated; it was, consequently, challenging to isolate words or parts of speech that typified the objects of frequent repetition. Nevertheless, two broad tendencies can be identified in the participants' repetition of words. On the one hand, sentence-initial words and pronouns in particular tended to be repeated. The phenomenon can be illustrated through the following example: "I, I, I was expecting some other outcomes or constructs" (Recording 14, 11:43). Several occurrences of repetition of this type were identified immediately after turn-taking, though it was not uncommon for participants to repeat words in this manner when they were in the middle of their contributions. Instances of repetition such as the one in the example above frequently overlapped with two other features of language production: hesitation and searching for words. On the other hand, repetition also seemed to be done when the participants were not apparently hesitant. Repetition of the second type appeared to pertain more to the content of what was being said than the manner of speech; therefore, it was interpreted as a way in which the students laid emphasis on what they were saying. For instance, "yeah, yeah. I already did. I already did" (Recording 19, 0:31) is an example of such repetition.

Questions were another prominent feature that characterised the participants' language production. The feature—like most others—was identified in pragmatic terms, that is, indicators such as the intonation or the perlocutionary effect of utterances were taken into consideration in addition to the syntactic form of questions. Most of the 145 questions that occurred in the data were asked with adherence to the conventions of Standard English grammar, which is to say that most questions were salient only in that they were interrogative and not declarative sentences. As per customary usage, the participants often began their questions with auxiliary verbs or interrogative pronouns depending on whether the sentences were closed questions or open ones. There were a few instances in which questions were asked without any grammar at all (e.g., "Why?", Recording 9, 2:51), but these comprised a minority. The lexical properties of questions proved more revealing than the syntactic ones. The analysis of the discourse markers with which questions were begun showed that three words had been used in utterance-initial positions more frequently than others. The conjunction "and" was used 10 times to begin questions. Another word of the same part of speech was similarly frequent: "But" was identified 11 times in the data at the beginning of questions. However, the conjunction "so" was the most common discourse

marker by some margin: No fewer than 29 questions were formulated with "so" placed at the beginning of the utterance. The three discourse markers combined were found at the beginning of 50 questions, which accounts for 34.4% of all questions, though the percentage of questions that began with discourse markers instead of interrogative pronouns or auxiliary verbs is higher than that because the less commonly used discourse markers (e.g., "well" or "OK") were not taken into consideration. It can, thus, be concluded that the questions that the participants asked began either with grammatically obligatory elements or with discourse markers, most frequently conjunctions.

Besides questions, question tags were also a feature of the participants' language production. These, however, constituted a distinct category due to their syntactic uniqueness (i.e., the fact that question tags are appended to otherwise declarative sentences). Although question tags were identified in 45 segments of the data, the total number of question tags was 54 as they were not coded separately within a single conversational turn. There were nine turns in which couples of question tags were identified; in all other cases, question tags occurred on their own and in utterance-final positions. In terms of frequency, there was one word which dwarfed all others in comparison: The adjective "right" was used 41 times as a question tag in utterances such as "so, we have to list, right? List the number of courses and the subjects or areas, right?" (Recording 19, 0:40). The second most frequent tag was "you know", which the students used eight times. Other words used as question tags included "yeah" (three times), "yes" (once), and "OK" (once). Remarkably, none of the 54 question tags conformed to the conventional format in that they were not "closed interrogatives reduced to just an auxiliary verb and a pronoun subject" (Huddleston & Pullum, 2005, p. 164). Indeed, with the exception of "you know", the question tags were comprised of neither a pronoun nor an auxiliary verb. Instead, the words listed above were recognisable as question tags by virtue of their utterance-final placement and the speaker's intonation.

The identification of some features of the data required the use of the full spectrum of audiovisual information available through the video recordings. Hesitation, with 104 occurrences, is a case in point: It was the manner of speech rather than the substance of it that determined whether an utterance was deemed to have been made in a hesitant fashion. The speed of speech as well as the tone of the speaker's voice were considered to be indicators of hesitation. Other common characteristics of hesitation included the presence of fillers such as

"so" or "you know". However, the most frequently occurring filler was "erm" or a similar sound, which was made at the beginning of 24 sentences that were labelled as hesitation. The second most common filler was "so", which was identified 12 times. Because hesitation cannot happen for its own sake, it was typical for speakers to exhibit signs of it whilst making utterances that possessed additional characteristics. The 104 instances of hesitation identified in the data overlapped with other features 105 times. The overlaps were spread across 23 other codes, not limited to features of language production. Nevertheless, the highest number of overlaps was between hesitation and repetition, two features of language production. Hesitation was found to have occurred alongside repetition 27 times in sentences such as the following: "This can kind of highlight some of the, some of the, erm, maybe cultural differences between the, between the first language and the second language" (Recording 7, 8:34). Hesitation also occurred when the students expressed an opinion (15 times), hedged (nine times), asked questions (seven times), and searched for words (seven times).

In addition to speaking in a hesitant manner, the participants were occasionally searching for words. In total, 85 instances in which the students appeared to be looking for a word were identified in the data, and they showed signs of it most frequently in a nonverbal fashion. The participants were found to have used nonlexical fillers akin to "erm" approximately 93 times in the course of searching for words (i.e., more than once in a turn); however, this is only an estimate as the transcripts of the recordings did not provide an exact representation of the sounds that the participants had made between uttering words. Lexical fillers that the students made use of whilst searching for words included "you know" (36 times), "like" (28 times), "what" (23 times), "yeah" (14 times), and "I mean" (13 times). There were also eight cases in which speakers explicitly signalled—using the phrase "how can I say"—their difficulty in finding a way to complete their utterances. This feature of language production may overall be considered either a special type of hesitation or very closely related to it given that speech is likely to be hesitant when the speaker is searching for words. However, it is difficult to determine what brings hesitation about if the reasons for it are not known. Thus, it is doubtful whether such a distinction (i.e., hesitation vs. searching for words) can be made accurately from the researcher's etic perspective, which is illustrative of the need for external indicators to be supplemented with emic insights gained from the participants in the analysis of language features.

Accounting for about 10% of the features of the participants' language production, hedging was also among the more prominent characteristics of the data. Unlike hesitation, hedging appeared to be a purely lexical phenomenon (i.e., it was identifiable without taking aspects such as the speakers' intonation or speech style into consideration). The adverb "maybe" was by far the most commonly employed device for hedging: The participants used the word 43 times in order to soften their utterances. Other words frequently used for hedging included "think" (29 times), "would" (19 times), "can" (13 times), "kind of" (13 times), and "really" (10 times). Based on the frequency of the most common hedging devices, it can be stated that the students tended to engage in hedging either by adverbial means or through the use of modal verbs. With its 29 occurrences, the lexical verb "think" is an outlier; however, it was often used in conjunction with modal verbs and adverbs as, for example, in the following sentence: "And I think that also for, for teachers maybe, um, I would maybe still give the same advice about the technical terms" (Recording 18, 4:38). In terms of its function, hedging seems to have been used to make the expression of views indirect as it occurred most frequently when the participants voiced an opinion: There were 21 instances of overlap between the two codes.

The language production of the students also included self-repairs, which are to be understood in the context of this study in the same way as Schegloff et al. (1977) defined self-repair: a "correction by the speaker of that which is being corrected" (p. 361). Interestingly, all 78 occurrences of repair were self-repair (i.e., not other-repair), and self-repair was self-initiated in every instance (i.e., not induced by a person other than the speaker). The types of self-repair identified fell into two broad categories: The participants corrected either linguistic slips they had made or the content of their utterances. An example for the former occurred when a speaker noticed the lack of concord between the grammatical subject and the verb in a clause and rectified it: "They understand maybe the words and what are, what, what's said" (Recording 4, 4:49). The repair of linguistic slips seemed to have been motivated by a desire to avoid using nonstandard forms, which would have resulted if corrections had not been made. By contrast, instances of repair aimed at the correction of content were different in that they were not needed for grammatical reasons. This second type of self-repair can be illustrated through the following sentence, in which the speaker replaced the subject of a sentence in order presumably to bring its meaning into alignment with the speaker's communicative intentions: "But we face, I, I face, erm, personally … this problem" (Recording 17, 15:58). Although the phrase "I mean" preceded

self-repair 12 times in the data, it was not the main marker of repair as it occurred in only 15% of the cases. Instead, repetition of the repaired part—as observable in both examples above—appeared to be the common feature that characterised instances of self-repair.

The data also included 61 examples of false starts, which bore some resemblance to self-repair as repetition was a noticeable attribute of both, but the two features differed in that speakers in whose utterances false starts were identified did not change the words when they uttered them in full. In the following example, the speaker used the determiner before the noun phrase twice, but the noun was uttered in full only the second time: "I have seen, erm, a comed a comedian who is from Finland" (Recording 10, 9:04). Repetition seems to have correlated with both self-repair and false starts, but the latter can be understood as a sequence of partial utterance of a word followed by full utterance. Crucially, false starts involved neither grammatical nor lexical correction of what was said.

Instances of paraphrasing, which occurred 13 times in the data, were also somewhat similar to self-repair in the sense that speakers augmented their utterances by introducing a second way of expressing what they initially said. However, paraphrasing did not include an element of repair. As illustrated by the following sentence, speakers who paraphrased themselves used synonyms or substitutive expressions without attempting to repair (i.e., replace) what they originally said: "What is more important is like to be comprehensible, you know, to produce a comprehensible language that is like the, in other words, we can say intelligible, you know, like they understand" (Recording 9, 5:59). Here, the adjective "comprehensible" was seemingly not replaced by the speaker, but they felt it necessary to enhance clarity by adding a synonym (i.e., "intelligible") and some follow-up explanation. Paraphrasing, then, was used to complement meaning rather than to correct it. In the example provided above, the speaker's utterance of the phrase "in other words" can be seen as an overt indication of paraphrasing. In the remaining 12 examples, paraphrasing was not marked in a similarly explicit manner but was discernible from the content of the utterances concerned. Structurally, however, repetition emerged as a commonality: Speakers tended to repeat the words that preceded the paraphrased sections of their speech. For instance, if a verb was paraphrased, then the infinitival "to" would be repeated before a synonymous verb was uttered. The phrase "I mean" was also used before paraphrasing on two occasions, but the prevalence of discourse markers surrounding paraphrasing is difficult to establish on the basis of only 13 examples.

Despite a tendency for the conventions of Standard English to be adhered to by the participants, nonstandard usage was observed in the data on 49 occasions. With 15 instances identified, subject–verb agreement was the aspect of usage in which the students most commonly used nonstandard forms. An example for lack of agreement can be seen in the following sentence, where a plural noun was followed by a singular verb: "The context is that, you know, the… here participants is, erm, mostly females" (Recording 8, 8:01). The usage of articles also resulted in departures from Standard English—seven times in total. Out of these, five instances of nonstandard usage concerned the indefinite article (e.g., "that's like a very long period to do a research", Recording 14, 10:47), whereas two examples of nonstandard usage involved the definite article (e.g., it was used before the first name of one of the participants). It needs to be acknowledged that the cases concerning the use of the indefinite article before the noun "research" could have been analysed differently (i.e., as nonstandard usage of a noun rather than of an article); nevertheless, even with a different categorisation, the overall number of nonstandard usages would have remained the same. By contrast, the classification of syntactic idiosyncrasies of usage was more straightforward. There were five instances in which the word order of a clause differed from what would have been expected in Standard English. This can be exemplified by the following question, in which the speaker used interrogative word order in the main clause as well as in the embedded clause: "Do you have any idea how can we overcome … this problem that we don't want to face?" (Recording 17, 15:52). Additionally, the data included examples of auxiliary verbs being absent from their customary positions. Some of these occurred (i.e., did not occur) in the passive voice, with the auxiliary verb "to be" having occasionally been omitted (e.g., "we all trained by teachers who are nonnative", Recording 5, 6:40).

Similarly to divergences from Standard English lexicogrammar, instances of unusual pronunciation were identified in the data. This, however, proved to be a challenging aspect of the analysis due to the fact that the participants' English idiolects, influenced by their first languages, were highly diverse. In keeping with the ethos of ELF research, prescriptive requirements (e.g., conformity to Inner Circle pronunciation models) were not used as the basis of the identification of pronunciation problems. Instead, comprehensibility in a broad sense was used to set a benchmark, which is to say that only pronunciations that rendered a speaker's message ambiguous or incomprehensible were included in this category. As a result of the restrictive classification, pronunciation was marked as problematic only 12 times in total. The dozen

peculiar pronunciations included the following example, in which the speaker consistently used the word "beer" (i.e., /bɪr/) in place of "beard": "He asked her if she likes his beer… So in [the student's home country], a beer is not well seen. You usually have to be well put, and you have to cut your beer and your hair" (Recording 6, 12:12). The final sound of the word in question was the voiced postalveolar approximant /r/, and it was not a slip as the word was repeated in the same manner three times within a single turn. The speaker's pronunciation resulted in the use of a word which was contextually inappropriate (i.e., not the one needed); therefore, the segment was labelled with the "pronunciation" code as the manner in which the word was pronounced could have compromised comprehensibility (though it did not). All sections of the data in the pronunciation category were coded based on similar considerations. Nevertheless, these instances of idiosyncratic pronunciation are unlikely to have posed a serious threat to intelligibility given that at no point did any of the students comment on another student's pronunciation of a word.

An additional aspect of language production which proved conspicuous was when the participants stopped short of completing their utterances. In total, 26 sentences were coded as unfinished. The common characteristic that these utterances shared was that the speakers' words petered out before they apparently finished saying what they were trying to say as, for example, in the following sentence: "Especially in the classroom, I think that different students can have different erm…" (Recording 9, 10:23). These instances of language use differed from those labelled as "searching for words" in that the words that would have completed the utterances were neither sought nor found. However, sentences such as the example above do not seem to offer much in the way of insights when they are lifted out of the context in which they appeared. Although unfinished sentences can be enumerated, their analysis calls for a more qualitative approach: The examination of the circumstances in which unfinished utterances materialised may give rise to more insightful findings regarding the reasons for and the characteristics of the phenomenon. In particular, the turn-taking procedures around unfinished sentences appear to merit closer inspection.

In summary, the data were analysed with a focus on the characteristics of the participants' use of English, and 12 main features of language production emerged. Repetition was the predominant feature: Not only did it occur more frequently than any other language feature, but it regularly appeared alongside other features of language use. The participants'

production of language was characterised by false starts, hesitation, paraphrasing, and self-repair; all of these features included repetition in some form. In addition to the prevalence of repetition, similarities were discovered between instances of hesitation and the ways in which the participants searched for words on the one hand and between self-repairs and paraphrasing on the other. In the case of hesitation and searching for words, the differences between the two features were somewhat elusive due to the inherent hesitancy involved in searching for words, which may mean that the distinction between the features can be called into question. The types of self-repair identified in the data can be separated into two categories: repair of language and repair of content. Importantly, repair was always initiated by the speaker (i.e., self-repair). The similarities between instances of self-repair and paraphrasing appeared to be more limited as the two features bore structural resemblance to one another, but paraphrasing was ultimately devoid of repair. The students also engaged in hedging, which was performed especially when they were expressing their personal views. The main linguistic devices through which hedging was carried out included adverbs and modal verbs. Finally, the analysis also led to the identification of examples of nonstandard usage and potentially problematic pronunciation. In terms of usage, the lack of subject–verb agreement proved to be the most common cause of diversion from Standard English grammar, whereas unconventional pronunciation variants occurred in a more haphazard manner. Neither nonstandard usage nor idiolectal pronunciation seemed to be an impediment to communication.

4.1.2 *Features of the Interpersonal Metafunction of Language*

The second category into which the codes were grouped concerned the interpersonal metafunction of language. The category is comprised of a total of 312 items, which belong to 12 different codes. The features that were perceived by the researcher as realisations of the interpersonal metafunction of language were the following: instances of agreement, overlaps, responses given to questions, requests for clarification, apologies, references to remarks made by other participants, instances in which clarification was provided, laughter, expressions of thanks, backchannelling, jointly created utterances, and echo. Despite the breadth of the category, the interpersonal language functions detected in the data were distinct from the features of the other three categories. The principal criterion for segments of the data to be included in this category was the presence of signs of interaction between the participants. For instance, examples of language use that consisted of offers of apology were seen to have fulfilled the interpersonal

metafunction of language because a speaker who is making an apology must, by definition, apologise to someone. Thus, the codes within this category were attached to instances of language use that involved more than one person—either directly or indirectly.

The most frequently occurring feature of the interpersonal metafunction of language was the expression of agreement. Overall, indicators of agreement were identified in 76 segments of the data, though the number of discourse markers associated with agreement was higher than that due to the fact that agreement, similarly to other features of the data, was not communicated exclusively through one-word utterances. Nevertheless, the one word which the participants used more often than any other to convey a sense agreement with their fellow students was "yeah", which appeared no fewer than 72 times in the turns coded as instances of agreement. What set "yeah" apart from the other discourse markers found in instances of agreement—besides its prevalence—was a tendency for the word to be used repeatedly within a single example of agreement (e.g., "Yeah. Acceptable. Yeah, yeah, yeah", Recording 7, 4:31). Additional discourse markers of which the students made use at least 10 times to indicate that they agreed with their interlocutors included the verb "agree" (24 times), the word "yes" (18 times), and the nonlexical interjection "uh-huh" (13 times). Of these, the use of the verb produced agreement in its most explicit form as it gave rise to verbalisations of the apparent illocutionary force of the locutions (e.g., "Yeah. Yeah. I agree with you", Recording 11, 9:32). As shown in the examples, the markers of agreement were seldom used in isolation; instead, the participants tended to express agreement either by using one discourse marker repetitiously (e.g., "yeah" several times in succession) or by using a discourse marker in combination with other indicators of agreement (e.g., "yeah" accompanied by the verb "agree"). The high number of utterances through which agreement was expressed becomes particularly striking when juxtaposed with the incidence of disagreement: Although it was not absent from the data, disagreement—with its eight occurrences—remained below the threshold for inclusion in the taxonomy. By contrast, agreement accounted for nearly a quarter of the features of interpersonal metafunction discovered in the participants' language use.

Another feature that characterised the interaction between the participants was overlap. Instances of overlap, which were identified 44 times in the data, occurred when a participant started to speak before another had finished their turn, resulting in a period of time during which at least two students would be speaking simultaneously. In essence, overlaps can be seen as an

aspect of turn-taking, though it is precisely the absence of turn-taking in a conventional sense that made these features of interaction conspicuous. Given that technology—as discussed in the description of the discourse features related to the medium of communication below—can shape features of interaction, it is worth scrutinising the circumstances in which overlaps occurred to determine whether they were caused by the fact that the participants were conversing via their computers rather than face-to-face. The analysis of overlaps indicates that this was not the case; the channel of communication does not appear to have been the main reason for overlaps because speakers whose contributions caused overlaps tended to start speaking long before their interlocutors apparently reached the end of their turns; thus, overlaps were not primarily caused by delays in computer-mediated communication. The question that arises, then, is whether overlaps can be more aptly considered to have been instances of interruption. In a technical sense, participants who decided to interject remarks whilst others were speaking did, indeed, interrupt their fellow students; in pragmatic terms, however, these examples of interaction can be seen as cooperative contributions to the conversations. The content of overlapping interjections contains evidence that substantiates this view: The interjections, which included "yeah" (21 times); the nonlexical exclamation "uh-huh" (15 times); and the adverb "exactly" (three times), were mostly expressions of agreement or affirmation. In addition, the adjective "sorry" also occurred seven times in the overlaps, which shows the participants to have been apologetic about interrupting their interlocutors. The analysis of overlaps between the code "overlap" and the other codes lends further credence to the observation that overlapping speech was often a sign of cooperation between the students. Overlaps of conversational turns occurred in the data when the participants jointly created utterances (four times), agreed with one another (five times), apologised (seven times), and provided feedback to the speaker by backchannelling (16 times).

Backchannelling was a unique feature of the interaction between the students in that it materialised exclusively in the form of overlaps: All 16 sections of the conversations where backchannelling was identified were also coded as instances of overlap. This fact alone, however, does not provide insights specifically into the manner in which the participants engaged in backchannelling given that overlapping speech is a necessary condition for backchannelling, which can be defined as "listener feedback in spoken interaction that does not involve a speaker shift" (Bjørge, 2010, p. 193). Thus, the segments of interaction in which backchannelling was identified can be considered a type of overlap, but these were distinguished

from other instances of overlap based on the fact that backchannelling never resulted in turn-taking. As far as perceived communicative intent in concerned, the cases of backchannelling identified in the data appeared to be expressions of affirmation: The students used the nonlexical interjection "uh-huh" 12 times and the word "yeah" nine times to provide feedback as they were listening to their interlocutors. Although the reasons behind the provision of backchannelling cannot be definitively established without obtaining emic data from those who gave such feedback, an external observer may be inclined to conclude that backchannelling was an aspect of cooperation between the students; by signalling their attentiveness, listeners may have implicitly encouraged speakers to carry on with their turns.

With 27 occurrences, instances of questions being answered constituted the third most common feature of the interpersonal metafunction of language found in the discussions, though they were much less frequent than agreement and overlaps. (Before the description of the feature, however, it is necessary to interpolate a parenthetical explanation: Although questions and responses given to questions are undoubtedly related from an interactional point of view, they were not categorised into the same column of the taxonomy because the prevalence of questions and the variation they exhibited in linguistic form rendered questions a more salient feature of language production.) Labelled as "response to question", the code included conversational turns that were produced as direct reactions to questions previously asked by another speaker. Both the content of these responses and the language used in them were heterogeneous due to the diversity of the questions that necessitated the answers. The only pattern discernible from the lexical content of the data was a tendency for binary questions to be answered in a dichotomic fashion (i.e., affirmatively or negatively). As a consequence, "yes" and "no" in various forms occurred in the responses, with the negative response having materialised marginally more often: "Yeah" or "yes" featured eight times in the participants' responses, whereas "no" or "not" occurred 10 times. In contrast to responses given to closed questions, the utterances that were made in order to answer open-ended questions were longer and more elaborate. This required the students to connect the different parts of their answers; accordingly, they made use of the conjunctions "and" and "but", which occurred 21 and seven times respectively. Nevertheless, the presence of conjunctions in the participants' speech is unlikely to have been a result specifically of the fact that they were responding to questions. What was more noteworthy, however, was the use of questions in responses to questions. In total, seven questions in six different turns were

identified in the responses given to questions; these were typically asked by respondents at the beginning of their turns seemingly to determine whether they or someone else should answer the question (e.g., "What I do personally? I mean I do, like, write everything…", Recording 18, 13:17).

Questions were also used by the participants of the discussions to request clarification. In total, 26 utterances were coded as clarification requests based on the presence of apparent intention on the speakers' part to enquire into what was said in a previous turn. For instance, clarification was often requested during the initial stages of the conversations when a student would suggest discussing the set text, and another one would ask which section of the reading was to be considered or what the teacher's instructions had precisely been for the speaking task. As clarification requests involved seeking information, the majority of them materialised in the form of questions. Among the 26 clarification requests identified, there were 13 examples of questions and 10 instances of question tags having been used to perform this interpersonal language function. Because question tags are similar to questions in terms of their function, it can be concluded that clarification was overwhelmingly requested by means of asking questions. However, the number of interrogative sentences was only five. The remaining eight questions asked were syntactically declarative (e.g., "so, we have to completely explain about the audience and the paper that we are going to?", Recording 17, 9:00). The question tags, as discussed above in the section devoted to the features of the participants' language production, did not consist of auxiliary verbs and pronouns; instead, the students sought clarification by appending single-word question tags to declarative sentences. Requests for clarification were made primarily through the use of the words "right" and "yeah", which appeared in the participants' requests nine and three times respectively. The combined number of times individual question tags were used in clarification requests is higher than the number of times questions tags were identified (i.e., coded) in the data because instances when a question tag was used repeatedly within a single conversational turn were not coded separately. For example, the following utterance was considered to be a single use of question tags for requesting clarification: "You were talking about more like formal testing, right? The standards of the test and exam, right?" (Recording 19, 4:33).

It is to be expected that requests for clarification made by students would compel their peers to provide clarification. What is noteworthy, however, is that there was discrepancy

between the two features of the data in terms of frequency: Clarification was requested more often than it was provided. The provision of clarification was identified in 21 conversational turns that followed clarification requests, which suggests that five appeals for clarification went unheeded. Nevertheless, the mere comparison of the number of codes attached to either function does not permit conclusions to be drawn regarding potential noncompliance with requests for clarification. Thus, the analysis of this aspect of interaction between the students would require a more qualitative approach with each example examined in its context. Besides the apparent discrepancy between the number of clarifications requested and provided, a feature of the data which was found to be notable was the binary nature of the clarifications. Out of the 21 conversational turns coded as instances of clarification, 11 began with some form of "yes" or "no" as illustrated in the following example: "No, I mean you don't have to explain about the audience itself" (Recording 17, 9:06). There were three further clarifications in which the "yes" or "no" element was present but not placed at the very beginning of the speakers' turns. Affirmatively phrased clarifications were given more frequently than those put negatively: "Yes" or "yeah" were found to have been used at the beginning of clarifications 16 times in total, whereas "no" or "not" were featured in only four clarifications. Overall, the word "yeah" was the most common component of clarifications with 12 occurrences, and it differed from "yes" in that the participants sometimes repeated it within a single utterance (e.g., "yeah, yeah, yeah", Recording 19, 4:39). Considered in isolation, the prevalence of "yes" and "no" in the clarifications allows the analyst to infer from the responses that requests for clarification must have been made in the form of closed questions. This observation seems to be borne out by the analysis of clarification requests presented in the previous paragraph.

Even though the participants of the study found it necessary to apologise to one another 23 times in total, the manner in which apologies were issued was one of the less noteworthy features of the interpersonal metafunction identified in the students' language use. The apologies were unremarkable in the sense that the pragmatic function showed little variation in its linguistic realisation: It was exclusively through the use of the adjective "sorry" that the students indicated being apologetic. The participants used the adjective on its own (i.e., without a verb) in 13 of the 23 instances of making apologies, whereas they used the verb "to be" before "sorry" in the remaining 10 cases. The verb was always used in the present tense, and the first-person singular indicative was the only form which preceded the adjective, with the copula having been

invariably contracted with its personal pronoun (i.e., "I'm" rather than "I am"). The analysis of overlaps between the different codes revealed that overlapping speech had been the most common cause for apologies: Students who interrupted their interlocutors said that they were sorry seven times. Technical problems also gave rise to apologies but only on three occasions.

Utterances in which reference was made to what someone had said were among the features of the data which foregrounded the interaction between the participants, thereby constituting another aspect of the interpersonal metafunction expressed through their language use. The 22 overt references that the students made to their interlocutors' remarks were identified based on the presence of verbs whose semantic content pertained to the verbal expression of thoughts. In decreasing order of frequency, the verbs were "say" (used 13 times), "mention" (used six times), and "talk" (used three times). As shown in the following example, the participants tended to refer in passing to what their peers had said as part of expressions of agreement: "I would also agree with you that … it's not, as you said, it's not necessarily a drastic change in their beliefs" (Recording 11, 8:01). In addition, the act of referring to other students' remarks appeared to serve as a springboard for participants to make their own points. This is evidenced by the fact that the phrase "I think" was used in these utterances 12 times—almost as frequently as the verb "say". In other words, speakers would refer to what their fellow students had said before going on either to elaborate on those points or to introduce new ideas. The following example is an illustration of the latter (i.e., the addition of an idea): "Besides everything that you mentioned, I think teachers should be, erm, educated and also teachers should be, erm, aware of the needs of students" (Recording 20, 4:53). In terms of their pragmatic functions, then, references to interlocutors' remarks seem to have been utilised by the participants in order chiefly to express agreement and to introduce their own contributions to the discussions.

A feature of the interaction between the participants which was conspicuous and challenging to analyse at the same time was laughter. In terms of analysis, laughter becomes salient on account of being an entirely nonlexical component of communication; nevertheless, communicative intent—from the analyst's etic point of view—is not as readily identifiable in instances of laughter as it is in segments of interaction where meaning is communicated through lexical means. Matters are complicated further by the fact that laughter does not lend itself to quantification in the same way as words do. For example, there may not be an objectively

accurate answer to the question as to whether it counts as one instance of laughter when two participants laugh simultaneously. Although 19 examples of laughter were identified in the conversations analysed in this study, the number is certain to be an estimate rather than an exact figure. This approximation includes only laughter that occurred during the discussions (i.e., only once the students had begun carrying out the speaking tasks and not during the initial moments when they would start recording themselves). Despite the scarcity of findings that emerged from the analysis of laughter, there was one distinguishing characteristic that laughter appeared to possess, namely its turn-initial or turn-final placement within discourse. As shown in the following example, laughter occurred typically at the beginning or at the end of speakers' conversational turns: "It's a good exercise for your brain <laugh>" (Recording 16, 12:51). Because it was not typical for students to laugh in the midst of their turns, it may be hypothesised that laughter was connected to turn-taking, though this is a tentative suggestion due to the low number of examples found in the data.

Acknowledgements of gratitude were also among the features of the interpersonal metafunction to which the participants gave linguistic expression. Although expressions of thanks were identified in 17 segments of the data, the number of actual phrases to which this feature of the interpersonal metafunction was attributed was 21 as there were three turns that included repetition. A tendency which the relatively small number of examples indicate is that the students leant towards more formal expressions of thanks, inasmuch as they opted for the longer variant more frequently. Out of the 21 expressions of thanks, "thank you" was used 18 times, whereas "thanks" featured only three times in the conversations. Another observation that can be made based on the linguistic form of expressions of thanks is that speakers tended to thank their interlocutors in a general sense (i.e., without specifying what had prompted them to convey their feelings of gratitude). There were only four instances in which "thank you" was followed by a prepositional phrase (i.e., "for" + a present participle) that provided a reason for thanks having been expressed. The occurrence of seven affirmative discourse markers alongside expressions of thanks suggests that the language function of saying thanks was occasionally characterised by agreement: The students used the words "yeah" (five times) and "yes" (twice) in their expressions of thanks. The following extract exemplifies the phenomenon as it comprises both words of affirmation: "Yeah. Thank you. Thank you, [Student 4]. Thank you. Yes" (Recording 18, 2:27).

The joint creation of utterances was perhaps the most cooperative feature of the interpersonal metafunction of language found in the conversations. These instances of cooperation would involve one participant joining the conversational turn of someone speaking and complementing it with an interjection. Thereafter, the speaker would often signal acceptance of the interjection by incorporating it into their turn, thereby creating an utterance produced by two speakers. Although this aspect of interaction was identified only 11 times in the data, it was seen as noteworthy given that the joint creation of talk is a typical feature of ELF communication (e.g., Kaur, 2016; Sato et al., 2019). The paucity of utterances created by two participants meant that the data did not allow a comprehensive understanding of how this aspect of the interpersonal metafunction had been realised to be gained; nevertheless, two characteristics which appeared broadly to apply to the 11 examples emerged. The first is cooperativeness, which seemed to underlie most, if not all, jointly created utterances. The analysis of overlaps between the codes revealed that utterances had been created by more than one participant when a speaker needed help: There were six overlaps with the code "searching for words", which implies that the joint creation of talk tended to arise in situations when the speaker who joined in felt that their fellow interlocutor would otherwise struggle to complete their utterance. The second characteristic is that of acceptance-cum-agreement. There are lexical indicators in the data which suggest that the students engaged in discourse in an overwhelmingly affirmative manner around jointly completed utterances: The words "yeah" and "yes" were used 21 times, whereas "no" was used only once. The participants' penchant for the affirmation of jointly created talk is illustrated in the following example along with the seemingly cooperative intention that may have given rise to such utterances:

> Student 4: You compare them, and you critically look at them to see if there's any, any
> issues…
> Student 8: And you just draw the conclusion, yeah.
> Student 4: And then you, then you kind of synthesise them and come up with a
> conclusion at the end. Yeah.
> Student 8: Yeah. (Recording 16, 10:16)

With only 10 occurrences, echo was the least commonly observed feature of the interpersonal metafunction of language in the conversations. Although instances of echo can be thought of as a type of repetition, the phenomenon was not grouped together with repetition for

the reason that echo was fundamentally interpersonal: Whereas repetition was a feature that permeated the students' language production (i.e., with the participants often repeating their own words), examples of echo always involved two participants as it resulted from interpersonal repetition. Thus, the main criterion for segments of the data to be labelled as "echo" was the repetition by one student of what another had previously said. A further criterion was that repetition would have to involve adjacent turns for it to be considered an instance of echo: The reiteration of a word or phrase would not be classified as echo unless it was performed by another student as a direct follow-up (i.e., in the next turn and preferably at the beginning of it). The criteria had two main implications for the results. Firstly, what was echoed was only to be found at the end of conversational turns given that it was turn-taking that allowed the participants to latch onto the final part of a speaker's turn by repeating it. Secondly, the nature of interpersonal repetition meant that echo was less readily analysable through its lexical components than other interactional features: Participants would repeat primarily content words said by their fellow students, which reduced the number of function words and discourse markers in instances of echo. Nonetheless, the word "yeah" occurred nine times in the segments of interaction that were coded as examples of echo, which indicates that the language used to express this function was characterised by a sentiment of acceptance. An aspect of acceptance is on display in the following example, where the student who repeated what her interlocutor had said echoed the verb "explain" together with "about" (i.e., exactly as she had heard it) despite the fact that the verb, being a transitive one, would not have required the preposition:

> Student 5: So, we have to completely explain about the audience in the paper that we are
> going to [question indicated by rising intonation]
> Student 10: No, I mean you don't have to explain about the audience itself, but…
> (Recording 17, 9:00)

In conclusion, the 12 features of the data categorised as expressions of the interpersonal metafunction of language were described in this section. As the name of the category suggests, the features were bound together by an element of interaction between the participants, which was exhibited in all of the features of the interpersonal metafunction to varying degrees. A general finding that emerged from the analysis of several features of the data was that the students had engaged in interaction with one another in a highly cooperative manner. The participants' willingness to support their peers was evident in their expressions of agreement,

which was the most frequently identified feature. The prevalence of agreement became even more pronounced when compared with disagreement, which was virtually absent from the data. The analysis of overlaps, the second most common feature, brought forth further evidence of cooperation in the interaction as it was shown that overlaps had occurred mostly when students had expressed agreement with a speaker. Backchannelling was a type of overlap that allowed the students to provide feedback to those who were speaking without a need for turn-taking. This feature, too, was found to have mostly been used as an expression of support and agreement. The analysis of responses to questions appeared to reveal more about the questions than about the answers in the sense that the only categorisation that the data seem to allow is the dichotomisation of responses along the lines of yes–no responses and open-ended responses. In addition, the presence of questions in some responses to questions was found to be notable.

Questions were also the primary means through which clarification was requested, with the requests having materialised as (not exclusively interrogative) questions and question tags. Despite the spirit of cooperation that characterised the conversations, the participants did not always comply with each other's requests for clarification because clarification was provided fewer times than it was requested. When clarification was provided, it was typically done in the binary form of yes–no responses, with "yeah" having been the dominant variant of the affirmative response. The way in which apologies were made proved to be one of the less remarkable features of the data due to the fact that this pragmatic function was always achieved through utterances that consisted of the adjective "sorry". Another feature of the interpersonal metafunction that emerged from the discussions consisted of those segments of interaction in which students made mention of their interlocutors' prior remarks. These were characterised by the presence of the verbs "say", "mention", or "talk" in the utterances. The instances in which students made reference to their peers' remarks can arguably be considered another aspect of cooperation between them given that these features of interaction were often precursors either to the expression of agreement or to the introduction of an idea. Laughter was also identified in the data and deemed to have been a feature of interaction between the participants, but its pragmatic function(s) remained elusive. Nevertheless, it was found that laughter had appeared mostly at the beginning or at the end of conversational turns. Utterances in which the students explicitly expressed their gratitude were formulated either as "thank you" or as "thanks". Out of the two variants, "thank you" was used more frequently. Aspects of cooperation and acceptance were

unmistakably present in the final two features of the interpersonal metafunction: jointly created utterances and echo. The interactants fashioned utterances together when a speaker appeared to be searching for words and repeated what their interlocutors had said in apparent acceptance of each other's words and ideas.

4.1.3 *Features of the Ideational Metafunction of Language*

The third category of codes included those features of the data through which the ideational metafunction of language seemed to have been expressed. The category consisted of a total of 281 items, which were spread across eight different codes corresponding to the following functions: expressions of opinion, personal examples, general examples, the addition of new ideas to the discussions, comments made on the readings, expressions of uncertainty, expressions of personal feelings, and discourse reflexivity. Although the analysis was focused on salient pragmatic features of the data in general rather than on functional grammar specifically, the term "ideational" was adopted from Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) to create and describe the category because the codes within it were attached to segments of the data in which the participants appeared to "**construe** human experience" (p. 29) through language. For instance, the students' use of language reflected their personal experience on occasions when they gave examples in order to illustrate the points they were making; thus, reflection on the speakers' personal experiences and schemata was more prominent than elements of interaction in these instances of language use. Judgements about prominence were made from the analyst's etic perspective. At the same time, the focus on the speakers' knowledge and experience appeared to result in a shift away from their interlocutors: Whilst the inherent other-orientedness of the interpersonal language functions discussed above can be encapsulated in the participants' use of the personal pronoun "you", segments of the data coded as expressions of the ideational metafunction could be described as having made use of the personal pronoun "I" more typically.

The statement of opinions was the most frequently identified type of ideational metafunction with more than a quarter of the items in this category having materialised in the form of opinions. The analysis of the lexical features of the items coded as "opinion" indicated that the participants had frequently voiced their views through the use of the personal pronoun "I" and a verb with the semantic content of holding beliefs. The verb "think" in various forms was by far the most commonly used content word in expressions of opinion. The students made use of the verb phrase "I think" 74 times in the course of expressing their ideas, and the past-

tense variant of the same phrase (i.e., "I thought") was used an additional 11 times in utterances coded as statements of opinion. Furthermore, the phrase was negated nine times in the data (i.e., "I don't think"); the adverb of negation was found to have been contracted with the auxiliary verb in all of the examples. In numerical terms, the incidence of no other verb neared the frequency of "think"; nevertheless, the students also used "say" (12 times), "guess" (seven times), and "believe" (three times) while describing their opinions. The analysis of overlaps between "opinion" and other codes assigned to the data allowed inferences to be made about the circumstances in which opinions had been voiced. There were 105 instances of overlap between the segments of the data that were coded as expressions of opinion and as various other codes. The two codes with which "opinion" overlapped most frequently were "hedging" and "hesitation" with 21 and 15 overlaps respectively. This suggests that the participants may have adopted a cautious approach in sharing their opinions with their peers presumably so as not to make strong statements based only on their beliefs. An example of hedging is shown in the following excerpt, where the sentence-final adjective that serves as the predicate (i.e., "good") is preceded by two adverbs (i.e., "probably" and "somewhat") that seem to moderate the opinion stated: "I guess literature, if you regard it as something that is published, erm, then it probably has a quality that is somewhat good" (Recording 5, 15:07).

In addition to the students' opinions, their feelings also found expression in the discussions. Coded as "personal feeling", the 12 items to which the label was attached were all indicative of emotions felt by the students. Although the heterogeneous ways in which the participants described their emotions prevented the items from systematisation, the lexeme "feel" emerged as a common component of the utterances in which emotions were discussed. In total, the lexeme occurred nine times in the data: "Feel" was used as a verb five times, and it was also made use of in its nominal form (i.e., "feeling") four times. Furthermore, there were five distinct emotions to which reference was made in the course of the conversations. Out of the five emotions, only happiness was mentioned more than once: The students used the adjectives "happy" twice and "glad" once. Aside from happiness, the emotions that were touched upon by the participants included admiration (expressed through the adjective "impressed"), annoyance, hatred (e.g., "I just hate doing that", Recording 18, 13:27), and a state of heightened anxiety conveyed in the following sentence: "I will freak out if actually I have to… I mean I wouldn't be able to do it" (Recording 15, 5:26).

Although statements of opinion comprised the code which included the highest number of items amongst the codes of ideational language functions identified in the data, this would not have been the case if the students' use of examples had not been categorised into two different codes: personal examples and general examples. Examples, in fact, outnumbered expressions of opinion given that the items in the two codes combined amounted to 91 examples in total. However, the division of examples into two types was believed to be necessary due to the schematic differences that may exist between the two: Speakers are likely to draw on different schemata when they use examples based on their personal experiences as opposed to using examples to illustrate points in general (i.e., without having experienced the situations in question). This difference, if existent, is unlikely to affect the perception of utterances from the hearers' perspectives, but it may well influence the manner in which examples are formulated by the speaker. The analysis of the lexical components of the two types of examples indicates that there were, indeed, differences between general and personal examples. In essence, personal examples were made personal linguistically (i.e., not schematically) through the inclusion of lexical indicators which were absent from those examples that were labelled as general ones. The differences are discussed in more detail below.

The most apparent difference between the two types of examples was that of distribution: Personal examples were more frequent with 53 occurrences identified, whereas general examples were used 38 times, making personal examples almost 40% more common in the data than general ones. Aside from their higher frequency, personal examples differed from general examples in that they included references to the speakers' circumstances. In particular, the prepositional phrase "in my" was used in 19 personal examples and completed by one of the following nouns: "context", "country", "department", "opinion", "reference list", "region", "teaching", and "university". Of these, "in my context" appeared eight times in the students' personal examples. By contrast, general examples did not include the prepositional phrase "in my" at all. Neither did general examples feature the phrase "for me", which appeared in personal examples 12 times. In terms of content, comments on countries appeared recurrently to result in the use of personal examples as students often based their examples on the context of their home countries, which they compared to other countries. Thus, the segments that were coded as personal examples included the word "country" 10 times and its plural form (i.e., "countries") seven times, whereas the same word (in the plural) was found in general examples only twice.

Despite the differences, the two types of examples showed similarities. Most notably, the students tended to use the same discourse markers irrespective of example type to highlight the use of examples in their utterances. The phrase "for example" was identified 43 times in the data: 16 times in personal examples and 27 times in general ones. Examples that did not include the word "example" were mostly identifiable by the presence of the word "like" in the utterances; the phenomenon is illustrated by the following quotation: "Yeah, like, let's say it's a quantitative study, and you don't have enough participants" (Recording 15, 9:51). Even though the phrase "let's say" occurred in the examples eight times, the word "like", which the participants used 73 times in their personal examples and 44 times in their general examples, was undoubtedly the most dominant indicator of examples.

Another feature of the ideational metafunction that seemed to have characterised the conversations was the addition of ideas to what had been said, which was identified in 36 segments of the data. The participants would add some of their ideas to the discussion in the form of follow-up comments. As such, items to which the "adding an idea to the discussion" code was applied were distinguished from expressions of opinion on the grounds that speakers who added ideas to what had been said would normally seek to make a connection between their contributions (i.e., the ideas added) and those of their interlocutors. As a consequence, instances of this type of language function were mostly located at the beginning of conversational turns given that speakers would often start their contributions by highlighting their relevance to the discussion. It is perhaps to be expected that one of the few commonalities found between the lexical properties of the items within this code reflected the pragmatic function attributed to the segments of the data (i.e., the addition of ideas). This was because the ideas which the participants added to what had been said were diverse; therefore, similarities were identifiable only in the ways in which the ideas were presented in the conversations.

Accordingly, the conjunction "and" was the most ubiquitous component of the utterances that were deemed to have served the function of introducing new ideas to the conversations (e.g., "And I also thought about, erm, a difference. I think that…", Recording 15, 13:01). The number of times "and" was identified in these segments of the data was 42; nevertheless, these were not all indicators of additional ideas being introduced to the discussions. Out of the 42 occurrences of the conjunction, 13 were found at the beginning of conversational turns (i.e., either in turn-initial positions or among the first three words uttered). Another lexical item that frequently

indicated the addition of ideas was the adverb "also", which the students used 22 times in total. Moreover, there were six instances in which the two most common discourse markers were used together (i.e., "and also"). Interestingly, synonyms of "also" were comparatively uncommon in the data: The adverb "too" appeared five times in utterances that were coded as additions of new ideas to the conversations, and the phrase "as well" was used only twice. It is also worth mentioning that the students used the word "yeah" 19 times in the course of introducing new ideas to the conversations. As shown in the following example, speakers would typically use "yeah" at the beginning of their turns to indicate their agreement with a comment made by an interlocutor before going on to add a new idea to the discussion: "Yeah. I think, erm, one thing that's kind of important too when you think about your audience, you want, you want to imagine that your audience is kind of a general audience" (Recording 18, 1:32).

Because the primary aim of the breakout room sessions that yielded the data was for the students to discuss research papers they had read, it was inevitable that the participants would make overt reference to the texts. These utterances were labelled as "comment on reading", and they were identified 29 times in the data. It ought to be noted, however, that 29 is merely the number of times the participants explicitly mentioned the readings. In truth, the extent to which the conversations were devoted to the discussion of the readings is not quantifiable. Even though the comments identified as references to the set texts were analysed with a view to learning about their features, no structural characteristics proved to be typical of these utterances (i.e., other than very general findings such as the tendency for the comments to have been made in the form of syntactically declarative sentences). Nonetheless, a small set of lexical items which indicated the apparent function of the utterances (i.e., to remark upon the readings) were discovered in the data. The noun "article" was the most frequent content word with 18 occurrences, which appears to have been underlain by the aforementioned purpose of the discussions (i.e., to make the participants converse about research papers, to which they would refer as articles). Having been used 12 times, the preposition "about" was also a commonly occurring word; there were four instances each of "talk about" and "be about" in the students' comments on the texts. The following usage of "talk about" is quoted by way of illustration: "It's mentioned here. I think he uses the word 'fallacy' just to, to talk about the general… to describe the general, erm, situation around the world" (Recording 2, 6:21). In instances such as the example provided here, the

researcher's schematic knowledge of the topic also facilitated the identification of comments made on the articles.

In addition to commenting on the set texts, the participants made remarks that indicated their uncertainty about what was being discussed. In a sense, expressions of uncertainty were related to the students' comments on the readings as it was often the discussion of details of the texts that engendered uncertainty. More than half of the 24 instances in which the students vocalised their uncertainty pertained to some aspect of the reading under discussion or, more broadly, to the topic of the seminars. The expression of uncertainty brought about by a section of a set reading is exemplified by the following excerpt: "Like, I don't know, like I've, I've never, I've never thought about it, but I don't know why they would mention such a thing" (Recording 3, 5:57). In spite of including occasional references to the texts that were being discussed, expressions of uncertainty were not categorised as comments on the readings because the utterances—from an external observer's perspective—appeared to highlight the students' feelings of doubt or lack of understanding rather than their views specifically on the readings. When uncertainty was not associated with the set texts, it was typically related to the teacher's instructions regarding, for instance, what was to be discussed in small groups (e.g., "I don't know exactly what we have to do", Recording 1, 5:03). In terms of their lexical properties, utterances in which uncertainty was verbalised were recognisable on account of the speakers' use of the phrase "I don't know" (which occurred 21 times) or the phrase "not sure" (which occurred eight times). What is more, the act of saying that speakers were not sure about something appears to have necessitated a degree of hedging, which is implied by the fact that the adverb "maybe" featured 12 times in the conversational turns that were coded as expressions of uncertainty.

Finally, those segments of the data in which speakers described the purpose of their contributions were identified as examples of discourse reflexivity (Mauranen, 2010b, 2023). According to Mauranen (2010b), "reflexivity helps discourse achieve two main purposes: to make discourse more explicit and precise, and to manage discourse strategically" (p. 18). Because Mauranen's conception of discourse reflexivity describes the phenomenon chiefly from the perspective of interaction, it can include reference to speakers' own speech as well as reflexivity in relation to what others say. In this study, however, Mauranen's term was applied more restrictively to the data with reflexivity identified in instances when a speaker verbalised the apparent illocutionary force of their own contributions (i.e., resulting in self-reflexivity only).

The decision was partly motivated by the assumption that speakers have access only to their own schemata; thus, reflexivity upon their own contributions may be seen as a linguistic manifestation of their emic experience. By contrast, reflexivity on someone else's contribution will reveal little about the other person's communicative intentions. Additionally, there is an element of interaction in reflecting on what others say, which makes such utterances also functions of interpersonal language use (hence the placement of the code "reference to interlocutor's remark" in the interpersonal category). With the narrow definition of discourse reflexivity outlined above, this feature was not among the most commonly occurring ideational language functions. In total, 11 examples of discourse reflexivity were identified in the data. On six occasions, reflexivity was introduced by the verb "want", which preceded another verb that would correspond to the students' self-declared communicative intentions. The verbs that followed "want" were descriptive of some aspect of verbal communication: "add" (an idea), "discuss", "say" (twice), "talk", and "talk about". Besides having used various verbs in the description of their utterances, the participants were found to have engaged in discourse reflexivity both anaphorically (e.g., "I just wanted to say that", Recording 14, 5:14) and cataphorically (e.g., "I would like to raise the first, erm, finding…", Recording 8, 4:06).

To recapitulate, the analysis of the discussions showed that the participants had expressed eight features of the ideational metafunction through their language use. The functions were organised into a category based on the perception that the instances of language use under each code within the category constituted a reflection of speakers' experience and knowledge. The first feature discussed was the expression of opinions, which accounted for more than a quarter of the features of the ideational metafunction of language. There was a tendency for opinions to be expressed in the form of verb phrases. The participants used the verb "think" more often than any other to express their opinions, but "say", "guess", and "believe" were also made use of in statements of opinion. Caution appears to have been exercised by those who voiced opinions given that the code overlapped mostly with the codes of hedging and hesitation. Instances in which the participants had shared their personal feelings were also identified in the data, and these were deemed to bear some similarity to expressions of opinion in that both were subjective remarks. The students chiefly used the lexeme "feel" (both as a noun and as a verb) to describe their feelings, and the five emotions they mentioned were admiration, annoyance, anxiety, happiness, and hatred. Examples, which were divided into two codes, were amongst the

prominent features of the data based on their overall frequency. The students used personal and general examples to illustrate their points, and the occurrence of personal examples was almost 40% more frequent than that of general examples. Speakers often introduced their examples by using discourse markers, of which two were particularly salient: The phrase "for example" preceded several examples, but "like" was the lexical item most commonly identified in instances of language use coded as examples.

Another ideational language function was seen to have been fulfilled on occasions when the participants contributed to the conversations by adding ideas to what had been said. The phenomenon was typically identified around turn-taking as speakers tended to link their own ideas to contributions made earlier by their interlocutors, which was overtly indicated by the discourse markers "and" and "also". The prevalence of the word "yeah" in conversational turns labelled with this code suggests that agreement with what had been said may sometimes have been a precursor to the addition of new ideas to the discussions. Apart from making general remarks, the students also commented specifically on the texts which they were discussing. Although the breakout room discussions were largely based on the readings, these utterances were considered noteworthy due to the explicit reference the participants made to the readings. Despite the lack of discernible patterns in structure, the comments made on the readings were identifiable based on their lexical components, which frequently included the noun "article" and the preposition "about", especially in the phrases "talk about" and "be about". Not only did the students remark upon the readings, but they also expressed uncertainty. Some of the items coded as expressions of uncertainty were related to the readings in the sense that the set texts proved to be the primary source of uncertainty. Occasionally, the teacher's instructions also rendered the participants hesitant. The lack of certainty was expressed mostly through the phrases "I don't know" and "not sure". The feature seems to have been accompanied by hedging as "maybe" was identified in turns that were coded as expressions of uncertainty. The final feature of the ideational metafunction of language found in the conversations was discourse reflexivity, in which the students engaged by articulating the communicative intentions behind their utterances. Instances of discourse reflexivity frequently took the form of a two-verb construction, wherein the verb "want" was followed by one that would describe the purpose of the contribution. The verbs that the participants used to reflect on the discourse they produced included "add",

"discuss", "say", and "talk". Examples of this feature of the students' language use were located both before and after the objects of discourse reflexivity.

4.1.4 *Features of Discourse Related to the Channel of Communication*

The fourth and final category into which features of the data fell included those elements of discourse that were seen to have arisen primarily due to the online medium of the discussions. Technology allowed the students to participate in groupwork sessions without occupying the same physical space; nevertheless, it remained an inescapable fact that the audiovisual information sent through their microphones and cameras was not as rich and instantaneous as it would have been in a face-to-face conversation. Thus, the circumstances of the discussions created a need for increased explicitness. Even though explicitness is a feature that characterises ELF communication in general (Kaur, 2011; Thongphut & Kaur, 2023), the participants of the study were seen—from the researcher's etic perspective—to have produced some of the overtly explicit features of discourse as a result of the fact that they had been engaged in computer-mediated communication. For example, aspects of turn-taking might have been different if elements of discourse on which interactants can rely in face-to-face conversations (e.g., nonlexical vocalisations, eye contact, or nuances of facial expressions) had been at the participants' disposal. The channel of the discussions, which can be thought of as both an enabler and an inhibitor of interaction, required the participants to adapt to the online context and modify their customary speech behaviours for enhanced communicative effectiveness. A total of 106 items were identified as belonging to the category of discourse features related to the channel of the discussions, and these were spread across four codes: moderating discussion, marker of end of turn, comment on technology, and leave-taking.

More than half of the discourse features within this category were related to the management of the talk exchanges. Coded as "moderating discussion", the discourse features under the label were grouped together based on their apparent illocutionary force: The utterances seemed to have been produced with the intention to control who would speak next. A typical example of discussion moderation would involve a speaker prompting another to contribute to the conversation. Although acts of discussion moderation were found to have occurred in 56 conversational turns, the quantification of the items was less than straightforward owing to the heterogeneous manifestations of discussion moderation. In some cases, a single word (e.g., a participant's name) would induce a student to start speaking, whereas at other times the

discussion was moderated in more elaborate ways. Hence, the unit of coding was the conversational turn rather than isolated instances of discussion moderation (i.e., the code was applied to all turns in which some form of discussion moderation was seemingly present).

Indirectness was a quality that characterised discussion moderation at large: Out of the 56 turns classified under the code, 28 were made in the form of questions instead of declarative or imperative sentences (N.B. "question" is used as an umbrella term to include a few utterances whose word order was not interrogative). However, the 28 turns in which questions seemed to serve the function of discussion moderation contained 36 questions in total as there were turns that included more than one question. The following quotation illustrates instances where more than a single question was used to moderate the discussion: "What about the rest of you guys? Do you think there's anything missing from this list?" (Recording 20, 3:14). The prevalence of questions among the utterances used for discussion moderation had implications for the lexical properties of the data: The interrogative pronoun "what" was used 36 times by students who moderated the conversation, though the number includes every occurrence of the word (i.e., even those four instances in which it was used in subordinate clauses rather than in sentence-initial positions in main clauses). The high incidence of "what" in the data can be seen as a reflection of the participants' propensity to engage in discussion moderation by asking questions. Other words that frequently appeared in the utterances labelled as discussion moderation included "so" (24 times), "OK" (12 times), "can" (11 times), and "who" (seven times). The last two of these are further indicators of the pervasiveness of interrogative discussion moderation: The former was used as an auxiliary verb in some questions (e.g., "so maybe can we just…", Recording 6, 17:43), whereas the latter was used as an interrogative pronoun (e.g., "OK, who wants to start?", Recording 17, 0:51). The segments of the data in which discussion moderation was performed by means other than asking questions showed more variance in form and pragmatic function. In some cases, declarative sentences were used to make suggestions (e.g., "I think we can move on", Recording 18, 5:11) or to give permission for someone to speak (e.g., "You can start", Recording 13, 0:24). On occasion, even the imperative mood was made use of in the course of discussion moderation (e.g., "Go ahead", Recording 13, 11:30).

Another feature of explicitness likely to have been necessitated by the channel of communication was the overt indication of the end of conversational turns. Although the measurement of the speed of turn-taking was not among the objectives of this study, it was

observed informally that the participants had taken turns speaking more slowly than they might have done in face-to-face discussions. Ordinarily, turn-taking in conversation is performed with almost no delay: According to Levinson and Torreira (2015), pauses between turns of different speakers can be as short as 0.2 seconds. This requires rapid recognition of when a speaker is about to finish their turn. In the online context, however, the end of turns can be identified more slowly and with less certainty. For instance, technical problems such as momentary disconnections from the internet may well create the impression that a speaker has finished speaking when, in fact, they have not. Thus, the participants could not have been certain that their interlocutors had completed their turns unless it was indicated. The students' awareness of this circumstance was in evidence on the 23 occasions when they explicitly signalled that they had finished their turns, thereby giving way to someone else. The most conspicuous example was the following: "Yes. That's my contribution for your discussion" (Recording 3, 4:50). The remaining instances in which the participants marked the end of their turns were shorter and less explicit. The words "yes" or "yeah" were the primary indicators used by the students to signal that they had reached the end of their contributions as 74% of the markers consisted of one of the two words (i.e., 17 out of 23). On four occasions, "thank you" was used at the ends of turns, and there was one instance in which the two discourse markers occurred together (i.e., "yes, thank you", Recording 19, 2:49).

No feature of the data appeared more unequivocally to have been related to the medium of communication than those segments that were labelled with the "comment on technology" code. Owing to their direct connection to the technology that enabled the participants to converse, these utterances would not have been made if the conversations had taken place in a physical setting. The 17 comments that were coded as related to technology can be divided into two main strands. The first of these consisted of comments made in relation to the data collection procedures. In the absence of the researcher, the participants assumed responsibility for recording their discussions, which occasionally became a topic of conversation. For instance, it was the reason why the verb "start" had featured frequently in the technology-related utterances: Enquires and comments were made about the recording (e.g., whether it had been started). The second strand of technology-related remarks was comprised of comments made on various aspects of computer-mediated communication, concerning principally the breakout rooms and the students' internet connections as illustrated by the following quotation: "I'm sorry. I was

disconnected for a while… and I couldn't find the room" (Recording 6, 12:52). The remarks related to technology do not appear to have disrupted the discussions as they typically occurred at the very beginning of groupwork sessions, after which the participants would proceed to carry out the speaking task without further interruptions.

The channel of the discussions also compelled the students to engage in leave-taking in a manner which would have been considered unusual in a physical classroom context. Arguably, any form of saying farewells would be unexpected at the end of face-to-face discussions because there is no parting afterwards: Students may be asked to return to their seats before reporting on their discussion to the rest of the group, but they stay in the presence of each other (i.e., in the same room). However, the breakout rooms in which the conversations were held were created and closed by the teacher, which meant that the students did not have control over the closure of their discussions; they were removed from the breakout rooms once the amount of time allotted for a given groupwork session had been used. On-screen notifications were sent to the participants shortly before the closure of the breakout rooms, and these messages were usually the cue which would prompt the discussants to bring their conversations to a conclusion by saying goodbye to each other. These utterances, which were found in half of the recordings analysed ($n = 10$), were lexically unremarkable as the participants used the same formulaic expressions for leave-taking that they would have used in face-to-face conversations (i.e., primarily the phrase "see you", which sometimes occurred in conjunction with the exclamations "goodbye" and "bye"). What made leave-taking noticeable was the abruptness with which it was performed. As some conversations had to be finished at short notice before the closure of the breakout rooms, the participants were occasionally forced to stop short of completing their utterances and say goodbye instead—as shown in the following example: "…and then you can accommodate those as a teacher, and… it's time to go back, so goodbye, guys" (Recording 20, 11:34).

In this section, an overview of the discourse features that were seen to have been a function of the online medium of the discussions was given. What emerged as a general finding is that the interaction between the participants was characterised by enhanced explicitness due to the fact that they engaged in computer-mediated communication, which did not allow them to converse as spontaneously as they could have done in a physical classroom setting. Aspects of explicitness were apparent particularly in turn-taking, which was managed by the students in

different ways. Discussion moderation was the first of the four features related to the channel of communication, and it was the most frequently identified feature. Even though students who moderated segments of the discussions overtly sought to control who would speak next, they did not do so in an overbearing fashion. In fact, discussion moderation was often done indirectly by means of asking questions. The tendency for the items that comprised this code to be syntactically interrogative had implications for their lexical properties as interrogative pronouns would recurrently occur in utterances that were coded as instances of discussion moderation. Besides the frequent use of questions, discussion moderation also manifested itself in other syntactic forms, namely declarative and imperative sentences. An additional facet of explicitness was observable at the end of conversational turns, which were sometimes marked in an overt fashion. The discourse markers that the students used to signal that they had finished speaking typically consisted of a single word and occurred in utterance-final positions. Indication of the end of speakers' turns was given most frequently by the use of the words "yes" or "yeah". The link between features of the data and the medium of interaction was evident in the case of comments made specifically on the technology which allowed the participants to converse. Technology-related remarks were made when the students encountered difficulty in using the online communication platform as well as when the data collection procedures necessitated discussion. Finally, leave-taking was a feature of discourse that arose seemingly because of the channel of the discussions: The participants had no choice but to stop speaking abruptly and say their farewells at times when they were notified that the breakout rooms would shortly be closed.

4.1.5 *Discussion of the Results of the Extensive Analysis*

The extensive analysis of the interactional data culminated in the production of a taxonomy of the features of the discussions. As it is shown in the taxonomy (i.e., Table 6), the features of the data are not evenly distributed among the groups into which they were classified. Although the data analysed consist of 1,601 items spread across 36 codes, the first category—which included features of the participants' language production—was comprised of 902 items arranged into 12 codes, which makes it by far the largest of the code groups as the items in the language production category are more numerous than the features of the remaining three categories combined. The disparity between the categories is particularly conspicuous when the groups with the two highest numbers of codes are compared: Even though the first two columns of the taxonomy both included 12 codes, only 312 items were categorised under the umbrella of

the features of the interpersonal metafunction of language, whereas the features of the students' language production were found to have been in excess of 900. This imbalance permeates the taxonomy at all levels as the features of language production continue to tower above the rest of the features even when the overall frequency of the codes is considered. Among the 10 most frequently occurring codes (i.e., repetition, questions, hesitation, hedging, signs of searching for words, self-repair, statements of opinion, expressions of agreement, false starts, and utterances aimed at discussion moderation), seven are features of language production, with the rest being evenly split between the remaining three categories (i.e., with one code from each category).

Even though the reason for the disparity between the number of items in the categories cannot be extracted from the data, it can be posited that the lopsided distribution of the features did not arise arbitrarily. The taxonomy is the outcome of the researcher's etic analysis; as such, the features in it are representative of an outside observer's perspective on the interactions. It may be the case that aspects of language production proved to be the most frequently identified features of the data because usage is a surface feature of communication and therefore the most readily identifiable component of it. The category with the second highest number of items was comprised of codes that described the interpersonal functions of the participants' language use, which are—once again—recognisable on account of interaction between speakers. By contrast, the ideational functions of language are likely to be more elusive due to being even more grounded in speakers' schemata and intentions. In the light of this, it is perhaps somewhat predictable that an etic analysis of interactional data would highlight more aspects of usage than ideational features given that the former are accessible to analysts through the surface features of language data, whereas the latter are less so.

Apart from the prevalence of the features within the category of codes describing the participants' language production, it is noteworthy that some of the features which occurred frequently in the discussions had also been identified by other researchers as typical characteristics of language use in ELF settings. An apparent example is repetition, which—with 194 instances—was the most common feature identified through the extensive analysis of the data and had also been noted for its typicality in several studies on ELF (e.g., Björkman, 2014; Cogo, 2009; Hahl, 2016; Kaur, 2009, 2012; Lichtkoppler, 2007). The types of repetition found in the present study were divided into two broad categories: One was the repetition of utterance-initial pronouns and words, whereas the other consisted of instances of repetition seemingly used

for emphasising a point. The findings are similar to those of Lichtkoppler's (2007) in that repetition was also used for emphasis in that study, though it should be noted that Lichtkoppler's research, which was devoted entirely to the analysis of repetition in ELF communication, gave rise to a more extensive list of different types of repetition. The results bear some resemblance also to the findings reported by Kaur (2012), who identified the duplicated utterance of keywords as one of the four main types of repetition that characterise usage in ELF settings. With 145 occurrences, questions were the second most frequent feature found in this analysis, and a number of empirical investigations (e.g., Björkman, 2012, 2013, 2014; Konakahara, 2015; Suviniitty, 2010) also highlighted questions as a feature of interest in the analysis of ELF interactions. The salience of questions in the present study derived mostly from their syntactic structure, which allows parallels to be drawn between the findings reported herein and Björkman's (2012, 2013) results in that she examined the syntactic diversity of questions in ELF interactions and identified instances of nonstandard questions being asked (e.g., questions with declarative word order). Questions in this thesis were found also to have been asked both with interrogative and with declarative syntax. In the case of nonstandard questions, rising intonation appeared to convey the speakers' interrogative intentions, which is consistent with research results from different ELF settings (e.g., Björkman, 2012, 2013; Lewis & Deterding, 2022).

Findings concerning additional features of the data also showed similarities to other researchers' empirical results on ELF interactional features. Hedging, for example, was found to have been performed by the participants of this study through lexical means, and Riekkinen (2010) reported similar findings: The lexical items "think", "would", and "kind of" constitute overlaps between the hedges identified in the two pieces of research, though "maybe", which was the most frequently used word for hedging by the students in this research project, is notably absent from the list of hedging devices employed by Riekkinen's participants. Although the difference between the findings may be indicative of the unique features of the contexts, it is also possible that the participants of this study found it necessary to make use of "maybe" in their utterances because they often described their personal views. Repair is another feature of the interactional data whose characteristics in the present investigation were, in many ways, analogous to what had been found in the ELF literature. For instance, repair materialised exclusively as self-repair (i.e., the students never repaired one another's speech), which lends further credence to the general consensus that repair in ELF interactions tends to occur as self-

repair (Björkman, 2011; Firth, 1996; Kaur, 2011; Mauranen, 2006). The students whose interactions were analysed in this research were found typically to have repaired either linguistic slips or the content of their utterances, which makes these results comparable to the repair practices examined by Björkman (2011), who described self-repair in her data along similar lines, albeit with three main categories instead of two. Furthermore, the analysis of utterances in which agreement was expressed showed a degree of congruity between the findings of Thompson's (2022) research and the features of the interactional data collected for this thesis. With its 72 occurrences, the word "yeah" was by far the most common indicator of agreement used by the participants of this study, and Thompson also found agreement to have been articulated in the form of interjections, with "yeah" having been the most frequent interjection with which agreement was signalled. Additionally, the rarity of disagreement in the data analysed in the present thesis echoes those findings that portray speakers engaged in ELF communication as principally cooperative and keen on the avoidance of conflict (e.g., Cogo & Dewey, 2006; Firth, 1996; Konakahara, 2015; Mauranen, 2010a). Some of the less frequently occurring features of the data had also been discussed in the ELF literature, for which discourse reflexivity (Mauranen, 2010b, 2023) is an example.

In addition to showing the resemblance of the features of the data to empirical findings on ELF pragmatics in the literature, the extensive analysis identified characteristics of ELF interaction that appeared to have arisen due to the attributes of the specific contexts in which communication was examined. Those features of the interactional data that seemed to have been bound to the context of interaction were categorised mainly in the third and fourth columns of codes within the taxonomy, that is, they were classified either as expressions of the ideational metafunction of language or as features related to the channel of communication. Opinions voiced, examples given, and comments made on readings were unique to the discussions that required the expression of these ideational language functions. Similarly, comments on technology or explicit indications of the ends of speakers' conversational turns seemed likely to have occurred owing to the contextual conditions under which the interactions took place. From the perspective of an analyst (i.e., an outside observer), some of these features are more likely to be identified on the basis of what participants say than interpersonal language functions or features of usage would be. For example, utterances coded as comments on the set texts were recognised as such because the students were literally commenting on what they had read—

whether the speakers' true communicative intentions were reflected in the semantic meaning of what was said is another matter and not for the analyst to determine. This, then, highlights the limitations of (etic) pragmatic analysis given that features of communication related to usage and interaction appear to be more readily identifiable than, say, features of the ideational metafunction of language.

The overarching conclusion which can be drawn from the results of the extensive analysis is anything but a revelation: The findings are the product of the researcher's etic interpretations of the language data; therefore, they should be seen first and foremost as a representation of the analyst's view of the features of the discussions. There are some overlaps with findings of previous ELF research, whereas other features seem to have resulted from the particular characteristics of the context of the conversations. The fact that some of the results seem to be in alignment with the outcomes of research published by various ELF scholars working in different contexts is indicative of the etic nature of the analysis (i.e., researcher relevance). In this sense, the research contributes to the existing body of knowledge on ELF pragmatics by providing a detailed description of the features of language use in a context of ELF communication. Nonetheless, the findings obtained through the extensive analysis of the data appear to be of limited value in conceptualising the relevant features of interaction from the participants' perspectives. As such, genuine insights into participant relevance are unlikely to be gained without incorporating the students' emic views into the analysis. It is for this reason that intensive analyses of a portion of the data were carried out from the researcher's etic and from the participants' emic perspectives, and the findings are presented in the following sections.

4.2 Results of the Intensive Analyses

4.2.1 *Speech Event 1*

4.2.1.1 Description of the Speech Event

Speech Event 1 took place in the morning of 29 April. Incidentally, all subsequent Speech Events were recorded during lessons that were held in the morning. This, however, is already a difference between the participants' perspectives: The lessons were in the morning only for those students who were in Hungary at the time, whereas the time of the lessons for those who were in Asia or in the Americas was different at their respective locations. (This aspect of the discussions was manifest especially when the participants exchanged greetings. When a student based in Europe would say "good morning", others would sometimes respond by

saying "good evening", which occasionally led to a short off-topic chat about time zones.) Speech Event 1 was conducted in Room 1 of the two breakout rooms into which the students were sent by their teacher. The recording of Speech Event 1 is 15 minutes and 2 seconds long, which corresponds closely to the length of the discussion itself, with only a few midutterance words having been cut off due to the abrupt closure of the breakout room. In total, five students participated in Speech Event 1; a summary of background information on the students is presented in Table 7 below.

Table 7

Background Information About the Participants in Speech Event 1

	Student 1	Student 6	Student 7	Student 9	Student 10
Age	39	43	28	24	24
Gender	Male	Male	Female	Female	Female
First language	Spanish	Kurdish	Spanish	Arabic	Hungarian

In addition to the students, the researcher was present as an observer in the breakout room but did not participate in any way. Out of the five students, only three took part in the discussion with their camera turned on: Students 1, 9, and 10. Students 6 and 7 did not have a video feed, but they were able to participate in the discussion with audio input sent through their microphones.

4.2.1.2 Analysis of the Speech Event

4.2.1.2.1   The Researcher's Perspective

The participants in Speech Event 1 were instructed by their teacher to discuss the structure of theoretical research papers based on what they had read for the seminar. The researcher identified three aspects of the discussion that seemed structurally salient. The first and most striking of these was that the overall impression the group discussion had made on the researcher was that of a dialogue. Although there were five participants present in the breakout room, three of them contributed very little to the discussion, which quickly turned into a two-party dialogue between Student 7 and Student 10 after Students 1 and 6 had each made one brief contribution. Out of those participants who spoke little, Student 6 was the first to contribute to the discussion with a response to a question asked by Student 10. There was a period of silence (of about 10 seconds) before Student 6 spoke, which appeared attributable to two factors from the researcher's point of view: Student 6 may have needed the time to think about what he was going to say and to formulate the utterance in his mind, but it is also possible that he was waiting

to see if any of his groupmates wanted to speak, and he chose to speak only when he was satisfied that he would not interrupt anyone. Student 6's answer was a self-contained response to Student 10's question; when Student 6 finished speaking, the question appeared to have been fully answered. Student 10 seemed to signal acceptance of Student 6's answer by providing supportive backchannelling towards the end of Student's 6 turn and by making an explicit declaration of her agreement. By contrast, Student 1's single utterance, which lasted for 18 seconds in total, was much briefer than Student 6's and did not seem to contribute meaningfully to the discussion. Whilst Student 10 was speaking, Student 1 asked a question that the researcher considered a type of clarification request. The manner in which Student 1 asked the question had an air of interruption about it as Student 10 had to stop midway through a sentence to give way to Student 1. When Student 1 had asked the question, Student 10 gave a short affirmative answer and carried on speaking. Aside from these contributions early on in the group discussion, Students 1 and 6 did not speak thereafter. In the remainder of Speech Event 1, only Student 7 and Student 10 engaged in discussion with one another. Their conversation appeared to be as natural as the circumstances allowed it to be: They seemed to listen carefully to what the other was saying and addressed the points made by each other in a considered fashion. What also indicates the organic nature of talk between Students 7 and 10 is the fact that only when the notes on the discussion were analysed retrospectively did the researcher notice that the others had been left out of the dialogue. This natural flow of conversation between Students 7 and 10 may be an explanation for why the others were not inclined to join in.

The second point of note is related to the first, namely the participation of the students or, more precisely, lack thereof. Student 9, who was present in the breakout room throughout the discussion and had her camera turned on, did not contribute to the conversation at all. The first question that Student 9's complete abstention raises is why she decided not to participate. Owing to the lack of verbal contributions by Student 9, it is not possible for the researcher to answer the question with any certainty. However, tentative conclusions can be reached by drawing on the researcher's background knowledge of the participants and the visual data recorded from Student 9's video feed. Whilst watching the footage of Speech Event 1, the researcher remembered having seen a recording of another discussion from a different day in which Student 9 apologised for being unable to answer a question and explained that it was because she was having to work on her computer (i.e., for her day job) during the lesson. In the light of this piece of information

and the fact that Student 9 appeared to be looking at a fixed point (possibly a computer screen) during Speech Event 1, it is not unreasonable to conjecture that Student 9 could have been prevented from engaging in discussion with the others by work that she was doing at the time. The second question to which Student 9's inactivity may give rise is why her groupmates did not attempt to involve her in the conversation. Once again, there is little in the way of verbal or visual evidence that could provide a factual answer, but the researcher thought that this was perhaps a sign of politeness: It could have been out of consideration for Student 9's negative face that her peers left her alone.

The third noteworthy observation concerns the role of Student 10 in the discussion. It was apparent to the researcher even without much analysis that Student 10 had taken it upon herself to act as a moderator in the discussion. The participants had been in the breakout room for 20 seconds when Student 10 decided to break the silence and said, "OK, so we have to talk about how a theoretical research paper builds up. So, based on what you've read, what would you say?" (Speech Event 1, 0:20). The question was followed up by Student 10's summary of the structure of an empirical research paper and a restatement of the original question with a structural difference: Instead of asking the others to share their recollections of what they had read, Student 10 was now asking what the differences were between the structures of empirical and theoretical research papers. Awaiting an answer, Student 10 did not nominate any of her groupmates; instead, she waited for someone to respond voluntarily. In the researcher's view, Student 10 took control of the discussion by asking these questions, but she did so without exercising too much authority. A desire to enable the conversation to take shape seems to have been the intention behind these opening utterances, and the response to the question (i.e., Student 6's contribution discussed above) shows that Student 10's intervention had, indeed, a facilitative effect on the discussion. What Student 10 did after asking the initial question struck the researcher as the most interesting aspect of this conversational turn, though it is questionable whether she did it intentionally or instinctively. Having asked her groupmates what they knew about the structure of theoretical research papers, Student 10 went on to describe the typical structure of empirical research papers, thereby outlining what she presumably believed to be shared knowledge within the group. With the known (i.e., empirical papers) established, Student 10 was able to direct the focus of attention towards the lesser known: theoretical papers. Accordingly, she abandoned the more open-ended question she had previously asked and put

forward a new one that focused specifically on the differences between the two types of research paper. This may have been a communication strategy employed by Student 10 in order to help her peers overcome the difficulty of having to start speaking about a subject with which they were not intimately familiar.

These questions asked by Student 10 at the beginning of the discussion were not the only instance when she appeared to try to steer the dialogue. As previously mentioned, Student 10 took an active role in preventing the conversation from grinding to a halt, and she can, from the researcher's perspective, be viewed as the de facto moderator of the talk exchange. Another example for this occurred when Student 7 and Student 10 had already talked about several aspects of the task, and the discussion seemed to peter out gradually. At this point, Student 10 asked, "Anything else? … Did she mention anything else that we should talk about?" (Speech Event 1, 10:18). In the question, the pronoun "she" referred to the teacher, from whom the students had received instructions for the speaking task. It is possible that Student 10 felt the need to refer to the teacher's instructions because she had run out of ideas of her own and was looking for a reminder of what it was that they needed to discuss. It is equally conceivable that Student 10 did not want to speak at this stage and was using the question to encourage her interlocutor to speak instead of her. Although the response did not shed much light on what the teacher had mentioned, Student's 10 question can be deemed successful in that it prompted Student 7 to touch on another relevant point, thereby furthering the discussion.

In addition to the three main points about the students' participation patterns and the structure of Speech Event 1 discussed thus far, there were three further aspects of the interaction between the students that attracted the analyst's attention: the use of repetition, a prominent example of midsentence hesitation, and instances of language use that deviated from Standard English. The first of these, repetition, is a feature of the data at large that cannot be categorised in a straightforward way as repetition can take many forms and may be deliberate as well as unintentional. In Speech Event 1, the researcher identified two types of repetition that seemed to fulfil two different aims.

In the course of the group discussion, Student 7 made it clear that theoretical research (i.e., the topic of their conversation) was new to her and that she did not feel ready to conduct such research. When she first mentioned that she had not had experience in theoretical research, she prefaced her position with what she called a disclaimer: "I have no idea. … I have never

done that theoretical research" (Speech Event 1, 4:52). Not only was this statement forthright, but it was also detailed: Student 7 went on to explain that she was pleased that there were options for them other than doing theoretical research, which added weight to the view already expressed. Student 7 made mention of her unfamiliarity with theoretical research again towards the end of the discussion, when she asked her groupmates whether they had been taught how to conduct this type of enquiry and then said: "I've never been taught how to do a theoretical research. … I mean, it's quite intimidating for me" (Speech Event 1, 14:42). Even though Student 7 did not use exactly the same words in these two remarks, her utterances had the same perceived effect on the hearer: By saying that she had neither done theoretical research nor been taught how to do it, Student 7 highlighted her inexperience and underscored her unfamiliarity with theoretical research. Despite being 10 minutes apart, the two utterances seem to be related in that the second statement can be seen as one that lends credence to the first one. From the perspective of the analyst (i.e., someone who, unlike the participants, has access to the recording of the conversation and watches it several times), this is also true vice versa: In the broader context of the entire conversation, the first statement supports the second one. Without input from the speaker, claims about intentionality would be unfounded and therefore cannot be made, but this kind of repetition, from the hearer's standpoint, may be considered a device used for adding emphasis to a point being made.

The second type of repetition that was found in this conversation is entirely different from the one analysed above. In fact, it is arguable whether this is repetition at all, but the researcher classed this discourse phenomenon among instances of repetition because the students sometimes repeated what had been said earlier—albeit not by them, but by their teacher(s). An overt example of the phenomenon was provided by Student 10, who said: "As the professor always said that we don't, you know, just repeat what other people said and summarise it, but we try to argue and develop ideas" (Speech Event 1, 3:21). In saying these words, Student 10 was making an utterance of her own; nevertheless, she was saying something that had been said by their teacher before. A student's repetition of what their teacher said may be seen as a form of interpersonal paraphrase, but what was crucial about it in this context was that Student 10 must have expected her interlocutors to know that their professor always said this. She was not telling them anything they had not known because they all attended the same module, and it was during the seminars of this module that the professor would always say what Student 10 was

paraphrasing. It is likely that Student 10 was trying to tap into knowledge that she believed they shared. The utterance does not seem to have been made with the purpose of either imparting new information or adding emphasis (as Student 7 did in the previous example). Instead, Student 10 may have repeated what their teacher had said in order to reference shared knowledge and thus make her interlocutors activate the schema with reference to which she expected them to interpret what she was saying and going to say next.

A conspicuous instance of hesitation came about as a result of the students' referring to the teacher in conversation with one another, though this particular example was not a case of paraphrasing the teacher. The hesitation occurred when Student 7 asked her groupmates a question about potential criticism that may be levelled at the shortcomings of different types of research. Having asked the question, Student 7 provided some further clarification and in doing so referred to the teacher: "I think that the criticism is a bit wild. According to some examples we have seen in with Professor …" (Speech Event 1, 7:34). The name has been omitted here, but it was the very source of the hesitation; Student 7 said the word "professor" with rising intonation and then waited 2 full seconds before adding the first name of the teacher. The hesitation was noticeable because of its length, and it was further accentuated by the unexpected element that followed the title: a first name rather than a surname. As an outside observer, the researcher can only speculate about the reasons for the hesitation, but there is more than one possible explanation. The most likely reason for the pause could have been that Student 7 struggled to recall the teacher's name and needed a couple of seconds to retrieve it from her memory. It is also possible that Student 7 failed to remember the teacher's surname, and she opted for the first name when she realised that it would take too much time for her to remember the surname. If either of these was the cause, then the incident had less to do with the pragmatics of deixis than with the technicalities of recall. However, Student 7 may have wavered before saying the name on account of being hesitant as to whether it was comme il faut to refer to the teacher by her first name. Another potential reason for the pause could have been difficulty experienced by Student 7 when trying to pronounce the teacher's surname, which she might have wanted to say initially after "Professor", but then uncertainty about the pronunciation may have caused Student 7 to abandon her attempt to say the surname and use the first name instead. This possible explanation is made somewhat more likely than the previous one by the fact that—unlike the surname—the first name in question is used internationally in many languages,

including Student 7's first language. Although Student 7 may know why she paused when she did, it is possible that even she does not know; there must have been a reason for the hesitation, but it could have been subliminal.

The students' use of English is the final point to mention as an aspect of the discussion that may be seen as important from the researcher's analytical perspective. Admittedly, there was not much to analyse in this regard because the participants by and large used Standard English save for a few instances of usage. One of the exceptions was a question asked by Student 10, wherein she added the third person singular inflection both to the auxiliary verb and to the main verb:

Student 10: So how does a theoretical research paper differs from this?

Student 6: To some extent it is, erm, it's not similar. For example, we start with the
abstract; there should be an introduction. (Speech Event 1, 0:57)

Without any further linguistic data from Student 10, one may be tempted to declare this to be an example of hypercorrection (Wardhaugh, 2006), but it is clear from the rest of the discussion that Student 10 is a highly proficient user of English and perfectly capable of navigating subject–verb agreement in accordance with the conventions of Standard English. Therefore, the usage quoted above could not have been anything else but a slip of the tongue (i.e., a minor performance issue that was not caused by a shortcoming of any sort in the speaker's competence). Student 10 is unlikely to have noticed the slip considering that she did not correct herself. Neither did her interlocutors; instead, Student 6—as shown in the dialogue above— responded to the question. It should be stated, however, that Student 10's groupmates could have noticed the slip without wishing to issue a correction. If they had corrected what Student 10 said, it would have posed a major threat to Student 10's positive face (Brown & Levinson, 1987), so all groupmates of hers who wanted to keep the atmosphere of the discussion cordial and cooperative would, in all likelihood, have pretended not to have heard the slip. It is dubious whether stimulated-recall interviews can confirm that the slip was unnoticed as someone who does not want to comment on their interlocutor's usage for fear of making a face-threatening act on record may also decide to keep quiet about it in a retrospective interview. Thus, unless the participants explicitly say that they noticed the performance mistake, it is likely that some degree of uncertainty will surround the detection of the slip even after the stimulated-recall data have been examined.

The other aspect of language usage noticed by the researcher pertained to the noun "research". Although generally uncountable in Standard English, "research" appeared in some cases to be used by Student 7 as a countable noun. This finding is based on more than one usage example from Speech Event 1. The total number of times Student 7 used the word "research" in its nominal sense during the discussion was 13. On no occasion did Student 7 make "research" plural, but there were six instances (i.e., 46%) when the noun was preceded by an indefinite article in her speech. An example for this occurred whilst Student 7 was thinking aloud and trying to specify some differences between empirical and theoretical studies; she said, "usually in an empirical research, they give recommendations, but I don't know if that a theoretical research would give recomme- I think that they always give, leave you with more, more questions" (Speech Event 1, 10:47). In this utterance, which includes two of the six aforementioned indefinite articles, the word "research" appears to be used to mean "paper" (i.e., research paper, which is a countable sense of the noun "paper") rather than "research" to mean "scholarly activity", which may conventionally be thought of as uncountable. When the remaining four indefinite articles before "research" are examined, a pattern seems to emerge: Student 7 used the indefinite article before "research" when describing what researchers might do or write in their papers, which suggests that Student 7 meant "study" or "research paper" when she said "research". If this is the case, then it can be argued that the presence of the indefinite article is pragmatically warranted from the speaker's perspective because the noun is used in a countable sense in these contexts. However, this argument is somewhat undermined by Student 7's final use of the indefinite article before "research" (quoted above as well), which seems to be something of an outlier: "I've never been taught how to do a theoretical research" (Speech Event 1, 14:42). Here, Student 7 was talking about doing research rather than reading or writing it, which suggests that she was using the noun in its more conventional sense (i.e., not a research paper). Even though conclusions are not easy to draw based on Student 7's use of "research" about her conception of the countability of the noun, it is the researcher's tentative view that Student 7 uses "research" on her own terms but by no means in a haphazard manner: She seems to add a marker of countability (i.e., an indefinite article) when she might feel it is contextually required, but she also uses the noun without an indefinite article when the meaning is unequivocally uncountable.

4.2.1.2.2   The Participants' Perspectives

The students' emic perspectives on Speech Event 1 can be illustrated through examining data from three follow-up interviews. Despite the researcher's request, Students 1 and 6 were not available for a stimulated-recall interview after the discussion. Stimulated-recall data were thus obtained only from Students 7, 9, and 10. Of them, Students 9 and 10 watched the recording of Speech Event 1 and commented on it on the day when it had occurred (i.e., 29 April), whereas Student 7 watched the stimulus a week later, on 6 May. Apart from happening later, the stimulated-recall interview conducted with Student 7 also differed from the follow-up discussions with the other two participants in that Student 7 did not have a video feed during the interview; it was an audio-only interview, which caused no hindrance at all because the focus during the stimulated-recall interview was on the stimulus (presented by the researcher).

4.2.1.2.3   Student 7's Perspective

Unfortunately, Student 7 did not watch Speech Event 1 in its entirety as the stimulus was truncated at both ends for different reasons. The beginning of it was not played in the stimulated-recall session for reasons of time efficiency. Speech Events 1 and 3 were shown to Student 7 in the same stimulated-recall interview (SRI), and Speech Event 3 was the more recent one at the time of the SRI, so it was shown first. Because the stimulated recall took 33 minutes to complete in the case of Speech Event 3 (and Student 7 did not have much free time), the researcher and the participant agreed that they would focus on those parts of Speech Event 1 that the researcher had deemed important based on his field notes and a preliminary viewing. This happened to be the second part of the discussion. However, the very end of the stimulus could not be shown because of an unexpected technical issue. Just 53 seconds before the end of the stimulus, Student 7 stopped the recording to tell the researcher that the battery of her computer was about to run out of power. (It ought to be remembered that the researcher and the participant were not physically in the same room as the SRI was conducted via Microsoft Teams.) Student 7 went away to fetch the charger for her computer, but she never returned. Thus, the SRI ended abruptly and before its completion. Nevertheless, the data that Student 7 provided while watching the second part of the stimulus offer valuable insight into the participant's emic perspective on Speech Event 1.

One of Student 7's comments on her participation in the discussion was related to a segment of the stimulus that the researcher had also analysed: Student 10's question about what the teacher had asked the students to talk about. In response to Student 10's question (quoted

above), Student 7 asked a question of her own: "What about the results?" (Speech Event 1, 10:37), and she carried on speaking about the differences between the contents of results sections of empirical and theoretical research papers (part of this is the first segment quoted above in the analysis of Student 7's stance on the countability of "research"). During the SRI, Student 7 stopped the recording at the point when she had started to talk about results sections and explained why she had felt compelled to say this. It emerged that the main motivation behind Student 7's decision to speak had been her apprehension about an uncomfortable silence that would have ensued if she had not spoken. As Student 7 said,

> I was trying to avoid the awkward silence, and I was thinking a lot about what to… when [Student 10] was asking like "Anything else?", and I could see, I could like preseen, presee the awkward silence. I was quickly looking for a topic, and then I came up with the results one, but I wasn't sure. In my mind, "oh my god, this is such a stupid topic." (SRI 14, 36:49)

When reflecting on the value of her contribution to this part of the conversation, Student 7 explained that she had not thought of her utterance as an important addition to the discussion at any point (i.e., neither before nor after saying it); she simply "didn't think it was good" (SRI 14, 42:09). Nevertheless, she felt it incumbent upon her to speak when the others did not. When asked whether her desire for the avoidance of silence had been coupled with an intention to involve the rest of the group (i.e., students other than Student 10) in the discussion, Student 7 said that it had not occurred to her. After explaining that she did not remember thinking about the other students, Student 7 reiterated that she had felt a sense of responsibility for preventing the discussion from coming to a standstill. She made it clear that she had not thought highly of her contribution but believed it to be preferable to the alternative (i.e., silence). What Student 7 said about the reason why she had spoken is interesting to the researcher especially because it shows that the hearer's assumptions about a particular utterance are not necessarily borne out by the speaker's reality. In this case, as indeed in most instances of communication, it would have been natural for any hearer to presume that the speaker spoke because she felt a need to convey her point of view, whereas the reality is that the utterance was motivated by the speaker's fear of silence. Apart from allowing a better understanding of the true reasons behind the utterance to be developed, the explanation also shows how Student 7's continued participation kept the interaction pragmatically cooperative. Cooperation, in the Gricean sense, can be understood as

some contribution towards "a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction" (Grice, 1975, p. 45). The shared purpose for the students here was to comply with the teacher's request by engaging in a group discussion, and Student 7 would have gone against the jointly accepted direction if she had refused to contribute to the conversation. By saying something rather than nothing, Student 7 simultaneously avoided silence and exhibited cooperative behaviour.

Another segment of the discussion that proved salient from Student 7's perspective was an instance of explicit agreement expressed by Student 10. It happened after Student 7 had highlighted the differences between the foci that empirical and theoretical researchers might be expected to adopt in their studies. In response, Student 10—somewhat tentatively—said, "yeah, I guess I, I, I… I would agree with this" (Speech Event 1, 13:46). Although this exchange did not seem to be of much significance to the researcher, the SRI revealed that Student 7 had considered Student 10's agreement important. As Student 7 explained in the SRI, Student 10's agreement had given her a sense of reassurance: "I remember the reason why I thought 'oh, it wasn't that bad; it was an interesting thing to add' is because [Student 10] said, 'oh yeah, like, kind of agree with it' in a positive note" (SRI 14, 43:01). Student 7 held a positive view on this comment of hers even though it may not have been positive from the outset considering that she attributed her favourable opinion of what she had said to the comment made by Student 10. It seems, then, that in the light of Student 10' agreement, Student 7 was able to reevaluate what she had said, and her interlocutor's comment gave Student 7 confidence about her own utterance.

4.2.1.2.4 Student 9's Perspective

The stimulated-recall session with Student 9 differed from the other SRIs in one crucial aspect: Student 9 could not have possibly commented on what she had said as she had not spoken once during Speech Event 1. This was pointed out to her before the SRI, but she and the researcher agreed that some of the footage would be viewed anyway in the hope that Student 9 might remember what it had been like to participate in the discussion as a passive member of the group. Because there were only so many points of the discussion that Student 9 could have commented on, the recording of the stimulus was not played in its entirety. Nevertheless, Student 9 was able to recall a few interesting aspects of what had happened earlier that day. She provided some insight into why she had not spoken, and she also commented on two contributions made

by her groupmates: one with which she partially agreed and one which she did not fully understand.

As there was very little observable evidence that would help account for the reason why Student 9 had not participated in the discussion, the researcher was eager to learn the truth from her. She explained that she had—despite her initial intentions—failed to follow the course of the conversation, and this resulted in complete disengagement. Student 9 summarised it in her own words in the following way: "I tried to follow actually at the beginning, but then I didn't even listen I guess at this part. And I think that was one of the reasons why I did not talk during the 15 minutes" (SRI 8, 4:00). The part to which Student 9 said she had not listened was fairly early in the discussion: only 35 seconds in. Nonetheless, it does not mean that she was not even making an attempt at finding her way back into the talk exchange. There were two reasons why Student 9 did not ultimately manage to engage in conversation with the others. The first had to do with technology: She was using three digital devices whilst in the breakout room, and the surplus of computer screens created some confusion. As Student 9 said, "I was trying to look for the article, and somehow I got lost in between" (SRI 8, 4:26) the numerous screens. Eventually, she found the article and endeavoured to locate in it what was being discussed, but then she realised that she had not remembered what to look for. It was because Student 9 was in the habit of reading the compulsory texts well in advance of the seminars that she had forgotten much of the reading by the time they started discussing the text in the group. This meant that Student 9 was unable to relate what her groupmates were saying to what she had read.

Student 9 concurred with what was being said when Student 6, in response to Student 10's question, outlined some important differences between the structures of empirical and theoretical research papers. In retrospect, Student 9 believed that her agreement may have been due to the fact that they (i.e., the students in the group) had all been taught the same curriculum; therefore, there were significant overlaps between their knowledge of the subject, which would have influenced their views in similar ways. However, she stated that she had not completely agreed with Student 6; there were aspects of Student 6's views on which Student 9 held a differing opinion. When asked whether she had felt inclined to express disagreement of any kind with those points, Student 9 responded in the negative: "It was just a minor detail about the abstract and the introduction thing, so I didn't really see it as a big deal" (SRI 8, 8:14). Hence, she did not raise those points of objection.

She did, however, mention to the researcher that she had not fully understood something said by Student 10. In the segment highlighted by Student 9, Student 10 drew her groupmates' attention to context, which featured in the text being discussed: "I guess even here, it's just like… they talk about context, and then what is context? What are, what were the theories about context?" (Speech Event 1, 3:05). Even though Student 10 did not direct these words specifically at Student 9, the latter was puzzled by them. As Student 9 put it,

> I think at that point when [Student 10] mentioned the word "context", I was like I didn't even understand what was the context. I mean what was the… it was like her abstract for the thesis, like, I didn't really get that thing. I think I read it like super quickly and didn't pay much attention to it, so I was like, OK, I don't know what we're talking about right now at this moment. (SRI 8, 9:42)

As the discussion went on, Student 9 understood that her confusion was partly caused by her failure to realise that Student 10 had been talking about the abstract of the article (i.e., the set text for the lesson). She was not able to contextualise what Student 10 was saying because she, having not paid much attention to the reading, lacked the required background knowledge. Had Student 9 read the text more carefully, she might have understood more readily to what her groupmate was alluding.

4.2.1.2.5　Student 10's Perspective

Unlike the others, Student 10 did not use English as a lingua franca to comment on her participation in Speech Event 1. Instead, the stimulated-recall interview was conducted in Hungarian because both the participant and the researcher happened to speak it as their first language. This makes not only SRI 7 (i.e., the interview during which Student 10 watched and described Speech Event 1) but all the other stimulated-recall sessions with Student 10 slightly different from those conducted with the other students (none of whom spoke Hungarian as their L1). A direct consequence of the decision to use Student 10's first language for the SRIs is that her recollections needed to be translated into English (quotations from her SRIs appear in the researcher's translation). It is not necessarily a drawback from the viewpoint of analysis because the researcher was able to work with the original Hungarian data; however, Student 10's views and phrasing cannot be represented as authentically as those of the participants whose words needed no translation. The other implication which the language of the SRIs had for the data concerns the quality of it. It would be difficult to estimate how much of an effect the language in

which the interviews were conducted had upon the process of recall and the recital of the participants' experiences; nevertheless, it can be assumed that the use of her first language did not hinder Student 10 in the task. The stimulus was played to Student 10 in full on the same day as the conversation had taken place.

Student 10's recollections of Speech Event 1 yielded two main findings; the first of these concerned her own role in the discussion. In particular, Student 10 elaborated on three aspects of her participation in the conversation. Firstly, noticing her own proactive attitude shown at the beginning of Speech Event 1, Student 10 offered an explanation for why she had decided to break the silence and get the discussion underway. She said the following:

> Why was I the first to speak? I took matters into my own hands, so to speak, because I saw that the others had been there in the room, but no one was saying anything, not even hello. And then I thought we should not waste more time, and this is why I started speaking. (SRI 7, 3:31)

However, Student 10 emphasised that she had spoken out of necessity; she was not keen to start speaking, and she would not have done so if there had been anyone else willing to talk. She added that it would have been convenient for her if someone else had come forward to express their views, but it was not to be, so she fulfilled what she felt was her duty.

The second view that Student 10 expressed about her role in the discussion pertained to the way she had felt about speaking. It emerged from her retrospective analysis that Student 10 had been aware of the imbalance in participation and thought that she had been speaking too much. As she put it, "it was apparent. I do feel it when I am the only one speaking. … I noticed that the others were not speaking" (SRI 7, 45:25), but it could not be helped because Students 1, 6, and 9 seemed reluctant to join in. However, it is noteworthy that although Student 10 thought that she may have spoken to excess, this perception of herself did not remain constant throughout the conversation. It was mostly during the first part of the group discussion that she felt she deprived the others of a chance to speak, but it was Student 10's impression that those who remained silent would have had opportunities at later stages of the discussion to contribute to it if they had wished to do so. In addition to the unwillingness of the majority of the participants to engage in discussion, Student 10 considered the verbal and nonverbal feedback she received from Student 7 in the course of their two-person dialogue to be an indicator of the control that she had over the conversation. In particular, there were instances of nonlexical backchannelling

(e.g., uh-huh) produced by Student 7 towards the ends of some of Student 10's turns which the latter regarded as subtle prompts for her to refrain from extending her utterances.

The third comment that Student 10 made about her role in the conversation was related to discussion moderation, and it, therefore, seems to be important concerning the overall dynamics of Speech Event 1. It must be emphasised that the remark came about without interference from the researcher. When describing the ways in which the online groupwork session had differed from face-to-face ones, Student 10 explained that it would ordinarily be expected of the teacher to act as a moderator in the classroom. Because this is a general comment rather than one about Speech Event 1 in particular, it would have been considered irrelevant had it not enabled Student 10 to make an important observation about her role in the exchange under analysis. Discussing the difficulty that the absence of the teacher (i.e., the default moderator) created in breakout room discussions, Student 10 stated that a participant needed to take on the role of the moderator voluntarily and that she was not ordinarily fond of this task. Asked how she had felt about assuming this role specifically in Speech Event 1, Student 10 said: "In this situation, I did not think of myself as a moderator. Instead, I was just asking questions randomly so that if anyone wanted to add something, they would be able to" (SRI 7, 49:28). Student 10's remark shows her intentions not to have been specifically to moderate the conversation, but she appears to have wanted to allow her fellow participants to take part in the discussion by asking the questions that she did. Student 10, then, saw her role in Speech Event 1 as that of a facilitator, and although she was aware of speaking more than her peers did, she hoped that what she was saying would lead to increased participation by the others.

The second major finding that derives from Student 10's recollections of the conversation relates to what she had thought about the contributions of her groupmates to the discussion. As mentioned above, there were not many of these, which makes them—especially what Students 1 and 6 said—even more noticeable. Out of the two students who spoke little in Speech Event 1, Student 6 was the first to speak; his contribution came in the form of a response to a question asked by Student 10, and this was met with her approval. As Student 10 later explained, she had been appreciative of the fact that at least one person had made an effort to respond. Student 10 was trying to pay attention to what Student 6 was saying, and while listening, she had two concerns in mind: She was assessing whether Student 6's answer was relevant to the discussion, and she was thinking about whether there was anything that she could add to Student 6's

response. Student 10 was also waiting to see whether anyone else would want to pass comment on the opinion expressed by Student 6. In contrast to the attentiveness that characterised her demeanour while Student 6 was speaking, Student 10's attention was less focused when Student 1 was speaking. Student 1's brief utterance, a question asked seemingly to seek confirmation that his view of theoretical research was shared by his groupmates, was made during Student 10's turn, effectively interrupting it. Student 10's response consisted of a concise "yeah" and of a short description of what the set text said about context (quoted above: Speech Event 1, 3:05). When she recalled replying to Student 6, Student 10 said that she had not minded being interrupted, but she had not immediately recognised the relevance of Student 6's question to the discussion. Student 10 believed that this was because she had read the set text shortly before the lesson; as a result, she was not as well prepared for the conversation as she would have wanted to be, and her limited acquaintance with the subject matter made her somewhat insecure and thus open to accepting a wide range of views on the topic under discussion. As Student 10 put it, "my reaction was due to the indifference I felt about the topic because I was not properly prepared for it as I had just read these things, so whatever he said, I thought, 'well, yeah, that is also possible'" (SRI 7, 15:30). This appears to explain why Student 10 agreed with Student 1 despite showing little outward enthusiasm for what he was saying. The second part of Student 10's reaction (i.e., her attempt at steering the discussion back to the reading) was caused by a related reason: She was trying to compare Student 1's point to the reading because, having just read it, she felt comfortable talking about it, but she would not have been equally at ease if she had had to draw on her broader understanding of the subject.

As Student 10 had been in conversation with Student 7 for the greater part of Speech Event 1, she also expressed views on their interaction. One of the comments was on her own way of providing feedback to her interlocutor. Student 10 made use of backchannelling expressions when Student 7 was describing what she had heard from her professors about differences between research paradigms. Student 10 made it clear that she had wanted to indicate her desire for a change of topic:

> When I said these little "yeah," and "uh-huh," and "mhm" words towards the end, when I started to do this more often, it was because I wanted somehow to close it and signal that I understood what she was trying to say, but we should move into a different direction. (SRI 7, 20:46)

The information above about the intentions behind Student 10's use of backchannelling and her subsequent response seems interesting particularly in the light of the fact that Student 10 did not appear to be impatient during this segment of Speech Event 1. In fact, she responded to what Student 7 was saying in a manner that seemed to suggest that she would have been happy to carry on discussing the topic. If anything, interest rather than indifference was seemingly expressed by her words and nonverbal backchannelling. However, the SRI data appear to contradict this perception; ultimately, it is Student 10's emic perspective that should prevail. Thus, it ought to be concluded that what appeared to be an engaged response to the researcher was, in fact, an attempt at initiating topic change.

Another noteworthy exchange from Student 10's perspective occurred when the differences between the scope of empirical research and that of theoretical research were discussed. Student 7 explained in Speech Event 1 that she believed empirical researchers were at liberty to be more selective about the issues on which they focus, whereas theoretical researchers were obliged by the nature of their research paradigm to adopt a more holistic approach by focusing on each aspect of the object of enquiry. Student 10's response, which has already been quoted above, was the following: "Yeah, I guess I, I, I… I would agree with this" (Speech Event 1, 13:46). This agreement prompted Student 10 to stop the recording and elaborate on the reasons for saying what she had done. She said that she had found it difficult to decide whether to agree or disagree with Student 7's opinion because she had—up to that point in her academic career—gained little experience in conducting theoretical research, so she did not feel informed enough to comment on the subject authoritatively. The other factor which influenced the answer she gave was the fact that the participants in the breakout room had received a notification from the teacher that only 1 minute remained of the discussion time; therefore, Student 10 was trying to steer the conversation towards its conclusion. As a result, her agreement may have been less genuine than it seemed. Student 10 summarised the difference between what she had said and meant in this way: "I agreed here, but I would say I was not sure then, and neither am I now. This was not the sort of agreement that is genuinely meant, but it was a kind of smoothing one, so to speak" (SRI 7, 40:55). Student 10's utterance appears to have served the discourse function of taking the conversation forward more than the expression of her sincere opinion. Student 10's indecision may also raise questions about her choice between agreement and disagreement, but she did not say why she had agreed other than because she had not explicitly disagreed with

Student 7. Student 10's lack of the necessary background knowledge to disagree, as she suggested, may have been a factor contributing to her expression of agreement, but it should also be taken into account that agreement would have been seen by both interlocutors as the default option. Once Student 7 had expressed an opinion that required a reaction, it was Student 10's turn, and she opted for the adjacency pair that was the preferred one (i.e., agreement). By doing so, she was able simultaneously to please Student 7 and to achieve her goal of averting entanglement in a follow-up discussion.

4.2.1.3 Summary

Although comments made by individual SRI participants can reveal something important about their perspectives (and thus be valuable for the analyst) irrespective of whether other participants were compelled to comment at the same point, remarks made on the same segments of the stimulus take on increased significance because they indicate points in Speech Event 1 that the participants deemed noteworthy independently of each other. The comparison of retrospective comments made by different participants on the same passage of talk allows for a triangulation of views. The times at which the participants stopped the stimulus to make a comment on aspects of Speech Event 1 are summarised in Table 8.

Table 8

Points at Which SRI Participants Commented on the Stimulus

Participant	Comments made at				
Student 7	10:45	11:16	13:15	13:53	14:08
Student 9	0:35	2:18	3:26		
Student 10	0:28	5:30	9:41	14:01	

It was Student 10 whose comments overlapped with remarks made by her peers because her SRI was more complete than those of her groupmates. As it can be seen from the times above, there was an overlap between the SRI comments concerning the very beginning of Speech Event 1. Student 10 explained that she had begun speaking because she had wanted to use the time available for the group discussion efficiently, and it was her impression that the others were reluctant to initiate dialogue. This feeling of Student 10's was vindicated by remarks made by Student 9, who indicated that she had found it difficult to pay attention to what her groupmate was saying, and the initial lack of focus on her part led to disengagement not just at the beginning of the discussion but for its entire duration. Similarly to Student 10, Student 7 also said, though not at the beginning of the conversation, that she had been keen to prevent

protracted periods of silence from occurring during the discussion. Thus, avoidance of silence seems to have been the underlying motive for some of the contributions the participants made to Speech Event 1.

Another point of shared interest is signalled by the overlap of comments made by Students 7 and 10 towards the end of the discussion. Student 7 said that she had not held a positive view of her contributions to the conversation up to that point because those were made out of a sense of obligation to keep the discussion going; however, an instance of agreement expressed by Student 10 was significant from Student 7's point of view given that it made the latter feel reassured about what she was saying. Interestingly, the very same comment was seen in a different light by Student 10, who was not sure that she had meant it in earnest. Although Student 10 did not disagree with Student 7, she voiced her agreement as she was cautious about making uninformed remarks—which she might have done if she had disagreed. In addition, Student 10 agreed because she was hoping to produce a smooth transition to the end of the discussion. What makes this exchange remarkable is that the participants' different interpretations of Student 10's utterance gave rise to divergent perspectives on the same situation: Student 10 considered her agreement to be nothing more than a comment made in passing to move the discussion forward, whereas Student 7 attached great importance to it since it boosted her self-confidence.

In contrast to the participants, the analyst viewed Speech Event 1 from the perspective of an outside observer and thus regarded different aspects of the discussion as important. The features of the conversation that struck the researcher as worthy of analysis can be divided into two main categories: participation patterns and language use. The first one has to do with the manner in which and the frequency with which the students contributed to the discussion. It was noticeable that the two-person dialogue between Students 7 and 10 had dominated the groupwork session, with Student 10 having been the moderator of the talk exchange. It came to light, however, that Student 10's own assessment of the situation would not support the researcher's view as she had not thought of herself as a moderator of any kind. Neither did Student 7 mention having had such a perception of her groupmate. Apart from one student's moderatorship or lack thereof, the researcher also attached some significance to Student 9's failure to engage in discussion with her peers. Although Student 9's retrospective description of the difficulty she experienced while trying to come to grips with what was being said at the

beginning of the discussion went some way towards offering access to her viewpoint, the specific reasons for her disengagement remain shrouded in mystery. The researcher's observations pertaining to the participants' language use included such aspects as Student 7's possible deictic considerations while referring to the teacher in her absence or as instances when the students' use of English did not conform to conventions of Standard English. Notably, none of the linguistic idiosyncrasies was highlighted during the SRIs, which seems to suggest that features of usage were seen as less important from the participants' emic perspectives than from the researcher's analytical perspective.

4.2.2 *Speech Event 2*

4.2.2.1 Description of the Speech Event

The second discussion under analysis will be referred to as Speech Event 2, and it occurred on the same day (i.e., 29 April) and as part of the same lesson as Speech Event 1, but the participants were different. The two speech events came about as a result of the division of the students in the module into two discussion groups: Speech Events 1 and 2 were happening simultaneously, with Speech Event 2 taking place in the second breakout room. Thus, the students in this room were to perform the same task as those in the other: to discuss differences between theoretical research and empirical research based on what they had read. The reading material had comprised of an actual report on theoretical research, from which the students were to draw inferences about the research paradigm and to contrast it with empirical research based on their knowledge of the latter. The length of the recording of Speech Event 2 is 13 minutes and 13 seconds, which is 12% (i.e., 109 seconds) shorter than that of Speech Event 1. The students in both discussion rooms had the same amount of time available for the speaking task, so the most likely explanation for the difference is that the participants of Speech Event 2 did not start recording the discussion at the very beginning of it. What was not different, however, was the number of interlocutors: Five students participated in Speech Event 2, just as in its counterpart. Some background information on the participants is summarised in Table 9 below.

Table 9

Background Information About the Participants in Speech Event 2

	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	Student 8
Age	43	32	27	29	32
Gender	Female	Female	Male	Female	Female
First language	Mongolian	Vietnamese	English	Persian	Burmese

The researcher was not present in the breakout room during Speech Event 2, and the video footage shows that the discussion was disturbed by nothing (i.e., there were no apparent technical problems, and the teacher did not enter the room at any point during the conversation). What is more, the students saw one another as all five of them were able to join the breakout room with live video. Out of the five camera feeds, four were high in quality and showed the speakers in detail. However, the quality of Student 5's signal was poorer, and the video transmitted was darker; as a result, Student 5 was barely visible on the screen.

4.2.2.2 Analysis of the Speech Event

4.2.2.2.1   The Researcher's Perspective

The most readily noticeable aspects of the discussion—and, indeed, of any speech event in this study—that the researcher can analyse include the distribution of conversational turns amongst the participants as well as the quality of these turns (i.e., the ways in which they affect what follows). This entails an assessment of the amount of time each participant spent speaking and of the significance of what they said (e.g., whether one person held the floor or whether any utterance stood out based on its perceived effect on the other participants) from the perspective of an outside observer. In terms of their involvement in Speech Event 2, the students appeared to be engaged in the discussion to a similar extent—with the exception of Student 5, for whose relative inactivity the reasons emerged towards the end of the discussion. Although Speech Event 2 never turned into a two-person conversation with the exclusion of the others, the two speakers who were somewhat more dominant than the rest of the group were Students 3 and 8. Their contributions to the discussion, therefore, are analysed in more detail below. Nevertheless, the impression that Speech Event 2 made on the analyst was that the conversation had, on the whole, been balanced as each participant spoke more than once. Even though it can be difficult to capture general impressions, the view that the discussion was balanced is partly based on the resemblance it bore to an ordinary conversation: Each participant contributed to the discussion according to their inclination, but no one was either left out of it or vehemently encouraged to join in, which—if the topic and the circumstances of the discussion are disregarded—can convey the (false) impression that the students took part in Speech Event 2 without extrinsic obligations to do so.

One of the first exchanges that seemed prominent was a repetition request at the beginning of the discussion, and it was then duly followed by a repetition. The reason why the

researcher ascribed importance to these conversational turns early on in the discussion was that the following few minutes of interaction seemed to unfold organically from this initial request. The starting point was when Student 3 said, "miss [Student 2] idea" (Speech Event 2, 0:07). The statement was made immediately after Student 3 confirmed that she had started recording the conversation (for the purposes of this study). The recording does not include the part that was missed, but it is precisely this which Student 3 appears to have realised: Student 2 had said something that was not on record. The declaration that Student 2's idea had been missed instantaneously drew a nonlexical reaction from Student 4 in the form of "uh-oh", and this gave rise to a moment of levity as four out of the five participants smiled and chuckled. The cumulative perlocutionary effect of what Students 3 and 4 said was that of a repetition request: Student 2 offered to repeat what she had said. Before she had a chance to do so, Student 8 added, "yeah, you can, you can say again, yeah, if you want to" (Speech Event 2, 0:14). Although the illocutionary force behind Student 8's words cannot be established without her input, the utterance seems to have been intended as encouragement because Student 2 at that point had already decided to repeat what she had said, so there was no need to reiterate Student 3's request. Furthermore, Student 8's addition of "if you want to" can be seen as an attempt at mitigating the threat the statement may have posed to Student 2's negative face. Aside from the manner in which repetition was requested and encouragement expressed, the dialogue is interesting because it highlights the importance of context in the interpretation of Student 3's utterance. It was a fragment rather than a fully formed sentence: Student 3 did not include a subject before the verb, used the verb in the present tense, and did not mark the genitive case on the noun phrase. What Student 3 said could have been misunderstood, but it was not: Student 2 understood from the context that Student 3 had missed (i.e., had not heard) her idea and proceeded to repeat it.

The repetition, during which Student 2 commented on the requirements that they would have to satisfy in the seminar paper that was to be written for the module, paved the way for Student 3 to add her own thoughts to the discussion. In terms of turn-taking, two aspects of the process appeared noteworthy to the researcher. The first was the way in which Student 2 stopped speaking: She seemed to signal that her conversational turn was about to come to its end. After uttering the final full sentence of her turn, Student 2 said, "yeah, yeah, that is" (Speech Event 2, 0:53), and she spoke no more. The second feature of turn-taking that presented itself as worthy of attention was the promptness of Student 3's reaction. Student 3 started speaking only a second

after Student 2 had stopped. It is likely that Student 3 interpreted Student 2's words as a marker of the end of her turn; therefore, she was able to speak without fear of interrupting Student 2. However, Student 3 would not have been able to contribute to the discussion at such short notice without having something to say. From the researcher's perspective, it seems plausible that she had been waiting for a chance to speak, and she knew that she would say what she wanted to once Student 2 had reached the end of her turn. If true, this would make Student 2's turn-ending words a more useful interactional device than she could have possibly known: Not only could it have enabled an orderly transition from one speaker to another, but it may also have provided Student 3 with the cue for which she had been waiting.

In addition to the circumstances in which Student 3's turn materialised, the contents of her turn were also analysed. She was speaking continuously for approximately 2 minutes, and when she started speaking, Student 3 used an explicitness strategy whereby she gave her interlocutors a preview of what she was going to say: "OK, I will describe and also, erm, comparison at the same time, the structure of a theoretical dissertation and theoretical article. So, erm, to my best of understanding after reading these materials, um, I can see that…" (Speech Event 2, 0:59). The elements of metadiscourse at the beginning of Student 3's turn can, based on Mauranen (2010b), be considered an instance of discourse reflexivity. By explicitly outlining what her interlocutors were about to hear, Student 3 made her utterance less challenging to follow for her fellow students. It could be argued that the discourse reflexivity made it easier even for Student 3 herself to say what she wanted to because thinking about her forthcoming contribution allowed her to organise her thoughts and prepare for voicing them. It is, however, difficult to say whether Student 3 employed the strategy intentionally or instinctively. What also seems noteworthy in this contribution is Student 3's attempt at hedging after indicating what she was going to say but before saying it in earnest. By pointing out that she based the view that she was going to put forward on her understanding of what she had read, Student 3 allowed for the possibility that her interpretation of the set text may differ from her groupmates' understanding of it. Such hedging may serve more than one purpose. Student 3 may have drawn attention to the fact that she was describing merely her own understanding of the reading in order to protect herself (i.e., save face) in case her views did not turn out to be shared by the others. Equally, the emphasis that Student 3 placed on her own interpretation in the utterance could have been intended as encouragement for her groupmates to verbalise their differences of opinion, thereby

creating further discussion. In addition to the discourse reflexivity and hedging found in the sentences quoted above, Student 3's use of English ought also to be mentioned. The researcher's attention was drawn to the features of Student 3's language use that did not align with Standard English. The most notable of these was her use of a noun where a verb would conventionally have been expected (i.e., "comparison" instead of "compare"). Student 3 hesitated before saying the noun, which may be indicative of uncertainty about either language or content. Nevertheless, Student 3 said what she said, but the usage appeared to elicit no response whatsoever from the other students in the breakout room: No one looked up or commented on it, and Student 3 carried on speaking. As four students were listening to Student 3, it is likely that at least one of them noticed the idiosyncratic usage, but they did not mention it presumably because it would have been a face-threatening act to do so and possibly also because they may not have wanted to comment for other reasons.

In a subsequent turn of Student 3's, there was an overt expression of uncertainty, which struck the researcher as salient because it can be interpreted as an implicit appeal for help. It occurred when Student 3 was responding to Student 8's clarification request. Whilst trying to clarify what she had meant, Student 3 said,

> she suggests three, erm, three theories of three different researchers, and she compares, erm, I mean that she compares and, um, and sh… and show… no [scholar's surname] is a man or a woman? I'm not sure. Um, <laugh> and, and then after, after compare… erm, comparing and contrasting, erm, the researcher also shows opinion of, erm, arguments, personal arguments. (Speech Event 2, 4:06)

Student 3 used the personal pronoun "she" to refer to the author of the article that was being discussed; the scholar whose gender she was not sure about was one of the authors cited in that article. Although the word order of Student 3's question was not interrogative, there is every indication that the utterance was intended as a question. However, no attempt was made by the other students to answer it. The only response to the question came from Student 4, who shrugged his shoulders and smiled. This, then, made Student 3 laugh briefly before she went on to circumvent the problem by referring to the scholar whose gender she did not know as "the researcher" afterwards. Failure to remember someone's gender can pose difficulty in using language (especially as it did here when it came to pronoun selection), but it is clearly not a language proficiency issue in the way as, for example, encountering unknown words would be.

Nevertheless, Student 3 relied on compensatory strategies that she could likewise have employed in ELF communication if her English language skills had been lacking: First, she appealed to her groupmates for help, hoping to obtain the information she needed. When she realised that help was not forthcoming, she abandoned her original message and rephrased it in a way that did not require knowledge of what she did not know (i.e., the scholar's gender). The resourcefulness Student 3 showed in overcoming the difficulty is testament to the speaker's communicative competence. The situation, however, begs the question of why the hearers did not provide the information that Student 3 was seeking. It is possible that they did not want to interrupt Student 3, or perhaps they did not realise in time that the question was a genuine request for information. The declarative word order used by Student 3 may have further delayed the realisation that the utterance was intended as a question. The other students, of course, would have been unable to help if they had not known the answer themselves, but the analyst's view was that this was unlikely to be the reason: Whom Student 3 named was an eminent scholar in the students' field, and they had heard of him (for the person in question is a man) before as his scholarly output was discussed regularly and at length during the seminars of the module.

Another section of the discussion that seemed important regarding ELF communication was a jointly constructed utterance (quoted above as Recording 16, 10:16). It came about while Student 4 was describing what in his view was an essential feature of criticality in theoretical research:

Student 4: I think this one, one thing that's important is that you take different theories, and you, you compare them, and you critically look at them to see if there's any, any issues…

Student 8: And you just draw the conclusion, yeah.

Student 4: And then you, then you kind of synthesise them and come up with a conclusion at the end. Yeah.

Student 8: Yeah. (Speech Event 2, 10:11)

It was when Student 4 paused momentarily (for between 2 and 3 seconds) that Student 8 filled the gap in the conversation by adding a short sentence. Student 4 appeared to want to finish what he had started saying, so he continued talking instead of abandoning his turn in order to give way to Student 8. Although Student 4 did not request or seem to be in need of Student 8's help, the latter offered it voluntarily. Student 8's perception of the situation could have been

different; as a result, she may have been motivated by a genuine desire to help her groupmate, but it is also conceivable that she added the sentence in order simply to express her thoughts (i.e., without believing that she needed to help her interlocutor). In a sense, Student 8 seemed to finish off what Student 4 was saying before Student 4 had the opportunity to do so. What is notable about the exchange is that Student 4 accepted the ending that Student 8 suggested for his turn, thereby making the utterance a jointly constructed one. It would be a reasonable question to raise whether Student 4 would have finished his utterance in the same way without Student 8's intervention. He appeared to be on course to reach the conclusion to which Student 8 steered him, but the fact that Student 4 expressed agreement with what Student 8 had said (by adding "yeah" at the end of his utterance) may indicate that Student 4 incorporated what he had heard into what he was saying.

Apart from her participation in the joint construction of an utterance, Student 8 attracted the analyst's attention with the effort she seems to have made at discussion moderation. In particular, she controlled the conversation at two points by asking questions in order seemingly to facilitate the involvement of those who had not participated in the discussion up until then. This first happened when there was a long pause in the conversation: After summarising her understanding of the chapters of the reading that was being discussed, Student 8 stopped speaking and appeared to ponder what to say next; however, she then decided to ask for the opinion of her peer instead and proceeded—after 9 seconds of silence—to ask, "what do you think, [Student 4], chapter 4 and 5? How can we, you know, like, generalise the structure, you know, when we talk about 4 and 5?" (Speech Event 2, 6:19). After asking the question, Student 8 continued speaking and formulating a response to her own question, so it was only a minute later that Student 4 was able to respond to the question.

The second question that Student 8 asked to induce one of her groupmates to speak was similar to the first one, but it ultimately took on greater significance, inasmuch as it changed the topic of the discussion entirely. Immediately after Students 4 and 8 had cocreated the utterance analysed above, Student 8 asked, "[Student 5], so what do you think, [Student 5]?" (Speech Event 2, 10:30), and she then laughed. Although the two questions were syntactically and semantically identical (i.e., they consisted of the interrogative sentence "what do you think" and the first name of the student to whom the question was addressed), they seemed to differ in terms of their pragmatic function. When Student 8 asked Student 4 what he thought, she was thinking

of something to say herself, and she appeared to be lost for words temporarily. The question, therefore, seemed like a request for help: It is likely that Student 8 wanted to involve Student 4 in the conversation so as to gain access to his knowledge and derive support from it. By contrast, Student 8 asked Student 5 what she thought in different circumstances. At the time of the question, Student 5 had not yet contributed to the discussion; she had been silent the entire time (i.e., for more than 10 minutes). Furthermore, Student 8 was not in the middle of a sentence, and she did not seem to be looking for ideas on which to elaborate. Thus, the second question is likely to have been asked in order to provide Student 5 with a means of joining the discussion and perhaps to learn why she had not spoken until then. In broader terms, then, the locution was the same in the case of both questions, but the illocutionary force was different.

The question that Student 8 put to Student 5, as mentioned above, was significant also because it altered the course of the discussion fundamentally. Having been asked what she thought, Student 5 did not answer the question, but she offered an explanation of why she had not participated in the discussion: "I, erm, received my vaccine, first dose, erm, 2 hours ago, and I have a headache. I'm sorry for today" (Speech Event 2, 10:40). Student 5 was referring to a vaccine against COVID-19, and her mention of the inoculation engendered two types of reaction. On the one hand, her fellow students sympathised with Student 5 and wished her a speedy recovery from her weakened state. On the other hand, the reference to the vaccine generated off-topic interaction between the students, who had until then been focused on the discussion task set by their teacher. This all changed when Student 5 said she had been vaccinated; they started discussing the different types and the availability of COVID-19 vaccines. The very word "vaccine" appears to have been a schema activator (Widdowson, 2007): Because the students were living through the COVID-19 pandemic, the mention of a vaccine easily reminded them of the situation and made them select the background knowledge with reference to which the word and the subsequent passage of talk would be interpreted. Proof of the students' shared background knowledge is the fact that Student 5 did not have to specify what it was she had been vaccinated against; there appeared to be no doubt whatsoever about the meaning of Student 5's utterance. All of her groupmates knew what she meant, and the relevance of the topic to the students' everyday contexts was such that they carried on discussing it for a while.

4.2.2.2.2   The Participants' Perspectives

As emic data were collected from all of the students who had participated in Speech Event 2, the discussion can be examined from five participatory points of view. Even though every student was willing to share their recollections of Speech Event 2 with the researcher, none of them was able to do so on the day of the discussion. The researcher tried to minimise the amount of time that would elapse between the recording of the stimulus and the stimulated-recall interviews, but the schedules of the students did not make it possible for the SRIs to get underway any sooner than 2 days after Speech Event 2. It was Student 3 who found the time for the SRI in just 2 days. Student 2 was available 4 days later, and Students 4 and 5 both did their SRIs 5 days later. Student 8 waited the longest: She watched and commented on the stimulus a full week after the conversation had taken place. With the exception of Student 5, all other participants were able to join the SRI sessions with their cameras on. Despite being only 13 minutes long, the stimulus generated a large amount of recall data: The shortest SRI was 28 minutes long, whereas the longest one lasted for 61 minutes, though it also included a short segment of stimulus from another discussion.

4.2.2.2.3   Student 2's Perspective

The stimulated-recall data provided by Student 2 shed light on what had happened at the beginning of the discussion: She repeated what she had said because they did not start recording the conversation immediately at the beginning of the breakout room session. (This was confirmed by Students 3, 4, and 8 in their respective SRIs.) Although she spoke at the beginning of Speech Event 2, Student 2 did not find her own contribution to the discussion worthy of comment. She did, however, remark upon Student 3's turn, which followed hers immediately. Student 3 had summarised the reading and presented some of her related observations to her groupmates, which made Student 2, who produced no reaction at the time, think highly of Student 3. It emerged that Student 2 had not read the set text thoroughly; as a result, she had to rely on what she gleaned from her groupmates and on what she referred to as her previous knowledge. As Student 2 said,

> I was thinking that she reads well. Yeah, she knows the answers because she read, you know; she did the homework really well, and that's why she knows the answers, yeah. For me, you know, I didn't read well, and that's why I didn't remember well. (SRI 10, 6:31)

Student 2 said that she had not had time to read the article, and it had made her feel somewhat uncomfortable, but she emphasised that she had thought Student 3's summary of the reading was more than satisfactory. In fact, it was her impression that no one except Student 3 had read the set text for the lesson. When asked why she had believed it was the case, Student 2 pointed out that Student 3 had been "talking, talking, talking; [Student 4] added some sentences, but [Student 8] didn't talk well. Also, [Student 5] didn't talk, and I also didn't talk, and [Student 3] talked a lot" (SRI 10, 19:35). Student 2 saw this as a sign of unpreparedness on the part of those who spoke little. She also had an explanation in mind at the time: It occurred to her that tiredness could have been the reason why the others had not read the article; she was tired and preoccupied with end-of-term assignments, so it seemed reasonable for her to assume that her peers were in the same boat.

What Student 2 also felt was a lack of connection between the conversational turns within the discussion. In spite of the fact that the turns of Students 2 and 3 at the beginning of the conversation followed one another in close succession, Student 3 did not make reference to what Student 2 had said; instead, she started speaking and said what she wanted to. Student 2 did not see this as outright rudeness, but she noticed that her groupmate was not supportive of what she had said: "I talked, and then she came without no, you know, support, and then she continued his/her talking" (SRI 10, 9:20). Ultimately, the absence of interconnectedness made Student 2 feel that there was "no support, no agreement, no argument" (SRI 10, 9:59) in the discussion. In other words, the students in the breakout room had their own agenda and did not try to relate to what the others were saying. Student 2 added that she did not think this was peculiar to Speech Event 2; in her experience, international students tended to communicate in such a manner, and this discussion was no exception. Despite finding the lack of peer support perhaps a little unfriendly, Student 2 mentioned a reason why it was better for the participants to focus on their own ideas and not comment on others' views: Conflict and disagreement were likely to be avoided if everyone concentrated on their own thoughts.

Although Student 2 did not offer her views voluntarily on the direct questions that Student 8 had addressed to Students 4 and 5 with the aim of finding out what they thought, the researcher asked her how she had perceived these questions. Interestingly, Student 2 saw the two virtually identical utterances in different ways. The first question (i.e., when Student 8 asked Student 4) had passed her by entirely because Student 2 believed that the teacher would ask her

about her plans for the seminar paper after the breakout room session, and this loomed large in her mind to the extent that she was unable to focus on what Student 8 asked and how Student 4 reacted. By contrast, Student 2 noticed the second question, which Student 8 addressed to Student 5, and she smiled upon hearing it. The SRI revealed that the smile had been a sign of disapproval. Student 2 said she had not thought it was appropriate for students to nominate each other in seminar discussions as she believed it was the preserve of teachers rather than students. When asked whether she had thought Student 8 should not have nominated Student 5 to speak, Student 2 responded affirmatively:

> Yeah, yeah, yeah, she shouldn't. Yeah, that's why I smiled, yeah. … Maybe [Student 5] didn't read, and she didn't have, you know, didn't have something to say, and in that case deliberately calling someone's name is not a good thing. … It is, you know, an embarrassing moment, you know, if I didn't read anything. (SRI 10, 37:16)

Despite her understanding of the threat to Student 5's negative face, Student 2 did not seem to sympathise with her groupmate on account of Student 5's having been vaccinated shortly before the discussion. It was Student 2's view that Student 8 should not have put Student 5 on the spot; nonetheless, Student 5 ought to have made an effort to participate in the groupwork session. As Student 2 said, "I was thinking that … even if I am in a situation like [Student 5]'s, I couldn't sit such like, you know, like 'I'm very vaccinated; I feel sick, et cetera'. I couldn't say that" (SRI 10, 39:59). She explained that had she been in Student 5's situation, she would have pretended that she was well, and she would have wanted to participate more in the discussion.

4.2.2.2.4   Student 3's Perspective

The SRI in which Student 3 commented on Speech Event 2 validated the researcher's presumption that she had been planning to speak prior to her initial turn. Student 3 explained that she had been browsing through the readings whilst listening to Student 2 and preparing to speak. She allowed her peer to speak first out of consideration for Student 2's perceived need to speak at least once in a discussion, which Student 3 had observed: "I let her say first, and at that time I intended to take turn to say, but I let her go first because she always want to make summary in a class" (SRI 9, 4:05). It is to be noted that Student 3 used a technical term (i.e., turn-taking) in her description of the circumstances that gave rise to her first utterance, and she did so entirely of her own accord; her use of words was not influenced by the researcher's questions. In addition to

providing insight into how Student 3 was able to begin her turn so soon after Student 2 had finished hers, the quotation above is illustrative of the importance of knowledge of the broader context in which these discussions took place. As per the recommendations of SRI research methodology (e.g., Gass & Mackey, 2000), Student 3 was encouraged—as were all the other participants—to share her recollections specifically of what had happened during Speech Event 2 (i.e., not what happens in general), but she was unable to talk about the specific situation without drawing on her general background knowledge of the classroom context. The comment is arguably indicative of the fluid boundaries of the context itself: What happens in one lesson may well take on significance in another, and here Student 3 saw a connection between this speech situation and a previous one, so her actions in this context were influenced by her prior knowledge of her interlocutors. This point will be revisited in the analysis of SRI data provided by Students 4 and 8.

Familiarity with members of the group was explicitly mentioned by Student 3 as a reason for increased willingness to become involved in interaction. Although Students 2 and 4 were not silent during Speech Event 2, the majority of the interaction was conducted between Student 3 and Student 8. Although it may have seemed accidental to the outside observer, it was not without reason according to the explanation that Student 3 provided: "Communications between me and [Student 8] was better because we have a close relationship outside of class, so you can see I answer her many times, more than other people" (SRI 9, 24:00). Student 3 then went on to recount how she had started a friendship with Student 8 in the first semester of their studies and explained that interactions between the two of them were frequent. This made Student 3 feel more at ease when communicating with Student 8 than with other groupmates. This, once again, appears to emphasise the importance of the broader classroom context as it had a direct impact upon the more immediate context in which the discussion took place.

Friendship notwithstanding, there was lack of agreement between Students 3 and 8 at one point during Speech Event 2, and it prompted Student 3 to describe her views on it retrospectively. The incident occurred as a result of Student 8's comment that Student 3 should focus on the structure of the reading after the latter had summarised the chapters of the reading that they were discussing. Dissatisfied with Student 3's summary, Student 8 proceeded to summarise the reading herself, focusing more on its structure. This puzzled Student 3 and struck her as unnecessary. In Student 3's view, her groupmate's summary had not differed substantially

from hers: "I was following what [Student 8] was saying about, and I didn't understand why she repeated what I told before because she's also repeated the main content of the chapters" (SRI 9, 20:11). Aside from considering it redundant, Student 3 found Student 8's follow-up summary objectionable for another reason, which was the wasteful use of time. Student 3 believed that she had already spoken more than she should have done when she summarised the reading, and in so doing, Student 3 herself "took a lot of time of people" (SRI 9, 21:07), but Student 8 did not take this into consideration and "continued to take time from others too" (SRI 9, 21:25) by providing a lengthy summary of the reading.

The expression of uncertainty about a scholar's gender, which was described above and deemed by the researcher also to be an implicit appeal for help, was a noticeable moment in the discussion. Student 3 was asked about it as she was the one who had asked whether the author was female or male whilst describing an article written by the scholar. Student 3 explained that the uncertainty had arisen because she was talking about two sources, one of whose authors she knew:

> The dissertation was done by the professor, our professor, so we know that is a woman. I used "she", and then when I moved to the article, which was written by [scholar's surname], and I continued to use "she" unconsciously, so when I suddenly I felt that I was using "she", and I don't know [scholar's surname] is a man or a woman; was it right or wrong to use "she". (SRI 9, 16:32)

Nevertheless, Student 3 carried on speaking, and, as discussed above, she overcame the problem that pronoun selection posed by using a noun to refer to the person whose gender she did not know. Beyond the description of the uncertainty caused by confusion over the genders of the authors discussed, Student 3 did not say anything in retrospect which would indicate that a genuine desire had existed on her part to elicit help from her groupmates. This, then, calls into question the analyst's impression that Student 3's utterance had been an appeal for help. Although she did ask whether the scholar was a man or a woman, she seems not to have intended the utterance to be seen as a genuine question; what she said may have been a rhetorical question, or perhaps not even that. It may have simply been a phrase she uttered as she was articulating her thoughts.

Student 3 also had something to say about getting Student 5 to speak towards the end of the discussion as she was involved in the process: After Student 8 had asked Student 5 what she

thought, Student 3 quickly added, "she looks like she have headache" (Speech Event 2, 10:35). She did not comment on the grammatically distinctive aspects of her language use such as the nonstandard conjugation in the adverbial clause or the absence of an article before the singular countable noun at the end of her sentence. She did, however, reveal pragmatically important information by saying that the intention behind her utterance had been to lighten the mood of the conversation. When adding the jocular comment about Student 5's having a headache, she wanted to make the situation less stressful and to make her peer feel more comfortable to speak. As Student 3 put it, "I just said something to change the atmosphere. For me, if I ask someone, and that person is not willing to speak, is not comfortable to speak, it means that I am creating stress for that person" (SRI 9, 35:13). Student 3 said she had noticed her groupmate's reticence to speak, and it made her want to avoid inflicting further stress on her fellow student. Therefore, she would not have asked Student 5 to speak if Student 8 had not done so. Once Student 5 was put on the spot, the only action Student 3 could take was to joke and change the topic of the conversation. She felt that the change of topic was warranted also because they had completed the speaking task at that point, so she wanted to "say something that can cause her more comfortable … or something funny because I thought that we already finished what we need to do, what we need to discuss, so we can talk to [Student 5]" (SRI 9, 37:24). Student 3 highlighted that the change of topic had been accompanied by a change in her facial expression (which was indeed visible in the video recording): She smiled more from this point onwards.

4.2.2.2.5   Student 4's Perspective

Even though he was able to share his recollections of Speech Event 2 in his first language (i.e., English), Student 4 stopped the recording to comment on it only four times. In addition to the comments offered voluntarily, the participant's memories of other moments of the conversation were elicited by the researcher to gain a fuller understanding of Student 4's perspective on the discussion. The first of these pertained to Student 3's contribution, wherein she had summarised the reading and drawn on her strategic competence when faced with the challenge of having to talk about a paper authored by a scholar whose gender she did not know. The occurrence seemed potentially relevant from Student 4's point of view because he was the only participant who responded in some way: He simultaneously smiled and shrugged his shoulders as Student 3 was speaking, whereas the other participants in the breakout room produced no visible response. As it turned out, however, Student 4 was in a similar situation to

his groupmate's; he said that he had not been sure about the person's gender either, so he would not have been able to help Student 3 select the correct pronoun. Other than having been sympathetic, Student 4 did not have "any vivid thoughts at the time" (SRI 12, 7:35), and he was happy simply to listen to his fellow student speak and follow in the reading to which parts she was referring.

The overt questions asked by Student 8 to find out what Students 4 and 5 thought were the other parts of Speech Event 2 where Student 4's recollections were sought. The first of the two questions, which was addressed directly to Student 4, was ultimately left unanswered as Student 8 did not pause after asking the question; as a result, Student 4 did not find a suitable point at which to provide his answer. Student 4 did not want to interrupt his groupmate, so he let her carry on talking. At some point, however, it occurred to Student 4 that too much time had elapsed for him to respond; therefore, he resolved against answering the question. In addition to giving this explanation, Student 4 allowed insight into his feelings about having been nominated by his peer to share his thoughts. He clarified that he had not been surprised by Student 8's question as they had more in common than it would have been apparent to an outside observer: They were both attending two seminars together and had been working with one another more than with the other students in the group. As Student 4 said,

> we have this class together as well, and it's a small class, so it's quite often that I'm paired with [Student 8], and then we're usually talking about stuff, and oftentimes I'm clarifying stuff for her in that class, so maybe she also thought that I had some kind of clarification for her in this case as well. (SRI 12, 13:34)

Once again, it was familiarity with another member of the group which seemed to have played a role in prompting Student 8 to ask what can be regarded as a very direct question in order to involve Student 4 in the conversation. The latter was neither surprised nor offended as they had established rapport elsewhere, which would have been unknown to third parties, including the researcher as well as the other students in the group. This, however, did not prevent the two students in question from engaging in the style of conversation to which they were accustomed. This episode is another example of how a specific speech situation can be influenced by the participants' general background knowledge of the classroom context. In this case, the boundaries of the classroom context shared by Students 4 and 8 were so fluid as to include an entirely different seminar taught by another lecturer.

In the light of the views Student 4 held on the manner in which Student 8 asked him to share his thoughts, it is noteworthy that he saw Student 8's attempt to get Student 5 to talk in a different way. Both utterances took the form of "what do you think + first name", but Student 4 considered the question that was put to him neutral, whereas he thought of the question that was addressed to Student 5 as amusing. He summarised his views on the second question in the following way:

> I thought that was just kind of a bit humorous because I had just assumed that [Student 5] didn't read it, or she didn't know what was going on, and … that somebody called on her and asked her to give her opinion was a bit funny for me, and I guess for the others as well. (SRI 12, 18:32)

Student 4 also acknowledged that "the conversation got a bit derailed … at that point" (SRI 12, 20:11), and it was because the topic of the discussion had shifted from the reading to COVID-19 vaccines once Student 5 revealed the reason for her passivity. Although the question that changed the direction of the talk exchange was asked by Student 8, Student 4 felt partly responsible for the change as he believed that he had "contributed to this derailment" by "asking questions about" (SRI 12, 20:24) Student 5's situation. Overall, Student 4 did not see the derailment as problematic for the reason that he felt the task set for the breakout room session had largely been completed by then. Additionally, Student 4 wanted to "get more personal and social at the end of the breakout room session just because it makes things more engaging" (SRI 12, 21:11), which was something that he had done in other discussions prior to Speech Event 2 as well. Similar sentiments were expressed by Students 3 and 8, and the willingness of the others to drop the original topic in favour of a more informal chat about COVID-19 vaccines suggests that Student 4's desire to "get more personal" was shared by the rest of the group. As the module was taught fully online, most of the students had never met in person, and they did not have any other means of socialising; therefore, it is understandable that they felt they needed some off-topic interaction when the task had been completed.

4.2.2.2.6   Student 5's Perspective

As the person who spoke the least in the group, Student 5 did not have much to share about the discussion in retrospect, but she was eager to reiterate that she had been unwell due to experiencing side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine she had received shortly before the lesson. Before Student 5 revealed the reason for being quiet, the others in the group assumed that she

spoke little owing to having not read the articles; however, this was not the case. Student 5 stated that she had read the texts, but she had been unable to remember the details: "I tried in my mind to gather the information that I read 2 days ago, but I couldn't; I was really sleepy, and I just listened to the others" (SRI 11, 4:45). What is more, the recent inoculation was not the only cause of Student 5's quietness. One of the more dominant participants in the discussion was Student 8; in fact, she was the one who called upon Student 5 to speak. However, Student 5 confessed that she, for the most part, had not understood Student 8's speech. It was, therefore, impossible for her to join in: "If I cannot understand most of the sentences that she mentioned, I cannot continue, or agree with her, or disagree" (SRI 11, 13:58). Although Student 5 attributed the incomprehensibility of Student 8's speech to a poor internet connection, it seems likely that accent differences also affected her ability to understand what her groupmate was saying. Student 5 did not mention issues of accent comprehension at all, but this assumption is based on the fact that she talked about "the difference between the voice of [Student 4] and the voice of [Student 8]. There's a big difference between them. I can understand him very good, but I can't understand [Student 8] most of the time" (SRI 11, 15:25). Although it is true that there was a difference between the two voices in terms of volume and sound quality, the difference did not seem major to the researcher (who was listening to the same recording as Student 5); both voices were audible and comprehensible on the recording. What was perhaps a bigger difference, to use Student 5's phrase, was that Student 4 spoke English with a prestigious Inner Circle accent, whereas Student 8 did not.

Similarly to the other participants in Speech Event 2, Student 5 was also asked about the confusion that arose when Student 3 was trying to refer to an author whose gender she did not know. Student 5 revealed that she had not known the scholar's gender either, so she would not have been able to help Student 3 choose between "she" and "he". Student 5's reaction to Student 3's struggle to find the appropriate pronoun was another aspect discussed in connection with this segment of the recording. At the time, Students 3 and 4 smiled, and Students 2 and 8 looked indifferent, but Student 5's facial expression was not on record as she was not clearly visible on her camera image. Student 5 saw the episode in a matter-of-fact way and said that she had not smiled because it was common for students not to know the gender of the authors of the papers that they read, so this would not have been a source of amusement for her.

The moment when every other participant in Speech Event 2 turned their attention to Student 5 came when Student 8 said her name and asked her what she thought. The question did not surprise Student 5 as much as it could have done; she believed that she was addressed personally because she had not said anything up until then, and the others were likely to be curious as to why this was the case. She added that she had felt like an outlier given that her peers appeared generally to be in a good mood, whereas she cut a despondent figure in comparison. Despite the directness of the question that was addressed to Student 5, her interpretation of the utterance was not negative. In fact, she saw the act of attempting to involve her in the conversation in a positive light. As Student 5 explained,

> actually, when somebody do this in a group, I am so happy because it shows that they are thinking about me as a participant in this group; I am an important person, and they wanted me to participate. So, I would like if somebody says my name and ask for my idea. If I can explain something, I can. Or if I cannot, like that day, I will say that I'm not feeling good, or I didn't study, or something else. (SRI 11, 21:49)

Student 5's reflections on having been asked about her thoughts seem to indicate that she had interpreted Student 8's question as an expression of interest in her opinion and as a sign that the others valued her as a participant in the group. Even though a direct question such as the one that Student 8 put to Student 5 compels the hearer to speak and can therefore be regarded as an imposition, the addressee's interpretation of the utterance shows that she did not think of the request in that way. What Student 5's attitude suggests is that her positive face (i.e., acceptance by her peer group) was a more important consideration for her in this situation than keeping her negative face intact (i.e., avoidance of having to perform an action which she did not want to do).

4.2.2.2.7 Student 8's Perspective

In the first 3 minutes of Speech Event 2, the students were summarising and comparing two pieces of the required reading in accordance with their teacher's instructions. The task was to compare the structure of a thesis to that of an article; Student 2 spoke first, and then Student 3 added her own contribution. It was on this part of the discussion that Student 8 had the most views to share. She made it abundantly clear that she had not been pleased with the way in which Student 3 summarised the reading. While Student 3 was speaking, Student 8 was looking at the reading, and she explained that she had been checking the texts to verify that Student 3's summary had been correct. Student 8 did not find herself in agreement with Student 3, and she

decided that she would voice her objections, but Student 3 carried on speaking for a while. Student 8 thought that the comparison should have been focused on structure, but Student 3 concentrated too much on the content of the texts. Eventually, Student 8 confronted Student 3 with what she saw as a problem:

> I wanted to interrupt, you know, like because she was just talking about those things, and, you know, I wanted to, I expected to hear the structure; that's why I asked her …, "Oh, I'm sorry, but you're talking about more about content, and we should be talking about the overall structure of the dissertation" or something like that, yeah. (SRI 13, 7:21)

Student 8's dissatisfaction with Student 3's comparison of the texts was such that she was still preoccupied with it when the conversation had seemingly moved on. As Student 3 was speaking and trying to find a way to refer to the scholar whose gender she did not know, Student 8's gaze remained fixed upon the screen of her tablet computer, on which she was reading the text in order to find the answer to her structural question. She claimed to have heard what Student 3 was saying, but she was still "trying to figure out the structure" (SRI 13, 9:39) of the two texts. This prevented Student 8 from paying particular attention to the trouble Student 3 was having with pronoun selection; thus, she did not notice which pronoun was used, but Student 8 stated that she had known that the third-person masculine pronoun would have been appropriate. As to why she did not answer Student 3's question (i.e., whether it was "he" or "she"), Student 8 said that she had not realised it was a genuine question: "I thought it was more like a rhetorical question, you know. … It is not really like a question, you know. And also at the time, I just wanted to figure out the answer, so I didn't interrupt" (SRI 13, 10:56).

Student 8 was also asked about the direct questions that she had asked her interlocutors to involve them in the discussion as these segments of Speech Event 2 constituted points of interest in the analysis. The first of the questions was addressed to Student 4, and this was before the conversation had reached what the participants considered the end of the task (i.e., the stage where an off-topic discussion was started). Student 8 was still in the process of attempting to make sense of the structure of the reading, so she asked Student 4 what he thought about the chapters. She assumed that Student 4 "might know the answer because whenever he says something, he can get the concepts, and he knows. I expected an answer from him, and he can help me with figuring out the structure for Chapter 4–6" (SRI 13, 13:49). Student 8 drew on her knowledge of the classroom context and, in particular, of the speaking habits of her classmates;

she knew that Students 2 and 5 were not generally as talkative as the others, and she therefore did not ask them. She obviously did not turn to Student 3 for help as she was displeased with Student 3's summary and comparison. This would leave Student 4 as the only option, but Student 8's choice was based on reasons other than simply the process of elimination. She asked particularly for Student 4's opinion as the two of them were "attending some courses together, and I'm closer to him, and also another reason is that he is a native speaker, so maybe he might have a better understanding of the structure; he might have more experience than us" (SRI 13, 16:38). Although Student 8 believed that Student 4's English was "much better than ours" (SRI 13, 17:35), she did not single out language proficiency as the sole reason why she had believed Student 4 to be the most competent person to answer her question. Student 4 also possessed relevant professional experience: He had been teaching academic writing, which Student 8 knew about, and this made her think that he would be able to answer structural questions about writing. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that—despite the close relationship that Students 4 and 8 had developed—she started using a "he and we" distinction when talking about Student 4's being a native English speaker.

The illocutionary force behind the other direct question (i.e., the one that Student 8 put to Student 5) was different. Student 8 noticed that Student 5 had not yet spoken and that she was sitting in silence while the others were conversing; therefore, Student 8 "invited her to talk or give her opinion on something, or maybe" to find out "whether she agrees with our ideas or not" (SRI 13, 23:54). This question, then, seems to have been intended as a facilitator for Student 5 to speak as there was no specific information that Student 8 wanted to learn by asking it. It is precisely due to the apparent intention of the speaker in asking the question that Student 8's perception of Student 5's situation was unexpected. Although it was considerate of Student 8 to want to involve her fellow student in the conversation, she appeared to be less sympathetic upon hearing Student 5 had a headache: Student 8 saw the headache as an excuse for Student 5's withdrawal—and not a convincing one at that. In Student 8's words,

> I don't think it was a good excuse. Maybe sometimes if someone was not in a good mood, for example, it happens to me sometimes. I wasn't happy; I didn't want to take part in the discussion; maybe I had personal problems. … I can understand, you know. But it was not a really good excuse. (SRI 13, 25:40)

Student 8 did not elaborate further on the point, but she talked only about the headache and did not mention the COVID-19 vaccine; it is possible that she did not believe that a causal relationship existed between having been vaccinated and suffering from a headache. Nevertheless, there was no additional explanation provided, so the only conclusion that can be drawn from the SRI data with some certainty is that Student 8 thought Student 5's headache was insufficient justification for her limited participation in the discussion.

4.2.2.3 Summary

Although there was some overlap between the retrospective comments that the participants made on Speech Event 2, most of it did not materialise naturally: When recollections were shared by more than one student on the same point, it was typically because the researcher elicited the participants' views on aspects of the discussion that constituted foci of analysis. It is not to say, however, that the participants' unique perspectives on the conversation were not valuable; on the contrary, they provided insights into their personal experience which otherwise would never have been known either by outside observers (e.g., the researcher) or by the other participants of the discussion. The students' hidden feelings and intentions can be considered fundamental determinants of the pragmatics of interaction in this ELF classroom context as they underlay and influenced the surface level of communication. Deeply personal insights, however, come at the cost of orderliness and comparability. For this reason, the triangulation of the participants' views can be performed more easily on the set of information that was elicited by the researcher and not offered voluntarily by the students. The times at which the SRI participants commented on the stimulus are summarised in Table 10, which does not include the comments elicited by the researcher.

Table 10

Points at Which SRI Participants Commented on the Stimulus

Participant	Comments made at								
Student 2	2:05	3:59	4:40	5:42	6:50	8:23	10:02	10:54	13:13
Student 3	1:38	2:20	5:53	6:29	6:53	7:12	11:09	13:13	
Student 4	0:58	5:40	8:32	11:39					
Student 5	2:22	7:33	9:31						
Student 8	0:50	2:08	12:00						

More often than not, the participants remembered thinking about their own contributions to the conversation. Examples of this aspect included Student 2's concerns over the lack of peer

support for her comments or Student 3's surprise at being corrected by Student 8. Interesting overlaps of comments occurred at those salient points of the discussion which were also analysed by the researcher. In particular, there were three key moments in Speech Event 2 when an enhanced understating of the conversation was gained from the participants' similar or different views on the situation. The first of these was Students 3's struggle to refer to the scholar whose gender she did not know; it was striking that no one helped her select the appropriate pronoun, but it emerged from the SRIs that only one of the five participants had known the gender of the scholar. In this respect, similarity characterised the participants' emic perspectives as they mostly did not know the answer; however, there were differences in the way Student 3's question was perceived: Some students looked upon it as a rhetorical question, whereas others did not notice it.

The other two segments of the conversation where the participants' recollections proved enlightening were related to the questions asked by Student 8. The question that prompted Student 4 to speak allowed both participants to reflect on their shared understanding of the relationship between them and to explain how it facilitated communication. Familiarity with members of the group and friendship between the students were also mentioned as tacitly important elements of the classroom context. The question that was addressed to Student 5 proved divisive: Some believed that Student 8 should not have asked Student 5 to speak, while others thought that Student 5 needed to be involved in the discussion somehow. Even more interestingly, opinion was divided on Student 5's explanation of why she had not participated in the discussion. A few of her fellow students appeared unsympathetic to Student 5's predicament and believed that she should have tried harder to contribute to the conversation despite feeling unwell, but other students felt sympathy towards her and thought it important to avoid putting her under undue stress. Compared to the participants' perceptions, the researcher's attention was focused more on the surface-level aspects of communication, particularly turn-taking and language use. The facets of the participants' language use on which the analyst's attention centred included phenomena that feature prominently in the ELF literature such as discourse reflexivity, strategic competence, and the joint construction of utterances.

4.2.3 *Speech Event 3*

4.2.3.1 Description of the Speech Event

The group discussion that is Speech Event 3 happened on 6 May, and it was one of two parallel sessions, taking place in Room 1 of the two breakout rooms. The length of the recording is 19 minutes and 23 seconds, and it can be safely assumed to be the full length of Speech Event 3 as it depicts the conversation from its beginning (i.e., when the participants greeted each other) to its very end (i.e., when the teacher closed the breakout room). In total, five students participated in Speech Event 3, and some background information on them is summarised in Table 11 below.

Table 11

Background Information About the Participants in Speech Event 3

	Student 1	Student 2	Student 5	Student 7	Student 10
Age	39	43	29	28	24
Gender	Male	Female	Female	Female	Female
First language	Spanish	Mongolian	Persian	Spanish	Hungarian

In addition to the participants, the researcher was also present as an observer, but he did not either participate in the discussion in any way or have his camera turned on. By contrast, all of the participants joined the breakout room with their cameras turned on, and they continued transmitting their video feeds for the full duration of the discussion. At no point did the teacher enter the breakout room, and no one appeared to have a technical issue whilst participating in the conversation.

4.2.3.2 Analysis of the Speech Event

4.2.3.2.1   The Researcher's Perspective

Questions appear to have played a central part in Speech Event 3 in more ways than one. It became apparent to the analyst—as well as to the participants—at the outset that questions would be a focal point in the conversation because the teacher of the group had instructed the students to discuss four questions, and this is what the sole purpose of the breakout room session was. Aside from the questions that were to be discussed, additional questions were asked by the participants in the course of the discussion, which seemed to be among the most salient points of the conversation; therefore, they were analysed particularly with respect to their apparent illocutionary force. Additional points of interest included aspects of turn-taking and the management of an instance of misunderstanding.

By virtue of taking an active role in the discussion, Student 10 attracted the researcher's attention more than the others did. She took centre stage early on in Speech Event 3 by asking her groupmates how many questions they needed to discuss and by reading out the first one that was to be answered. Although Student 10 spoke first and read out then explained the first question that needed to be discussed, it was Student 5 a few seconds later who gave her fellow students encouragement to speak even more overtly by asking, "who wants to start?" (Speech Event 3, 0:51). Nevertheless, there are several reasons why Student 10 can be considered the default moderator of the conversation. Asking questions is one of them, which Student 10 did in 10 out of her 17 turns; she asked more than one in some turns, so the total number of the questions she asked was higher than 10. The questions were analysed qualitatively through the researcher's interpretation to determine their possible functions (i.e., perceived intended meaning). This was necessary also because the very notion of a question can be elusive unless utterances are analysed in context with a focus on the apparent intention of the speaker, which is to say that not everything is a question that seems to be one; likewise, utterances that do not appear to be questions can have the perlocutionary effect of one. In Student 10's case, for example, there were utterances that seemed to be intended as questions despite the fact that they were not fully fledged interrogative sentences (e.g., a single word uttered with rising intonation). Based on Student 10's turns (i.e., locutionary acts) and her interlocutors' responses (i.e., perlocutionary effects), it seems that Student 10's intention was discussion moderation in five out of her 10 turns in which questions were identified. Examples include the single-word utterance mentioned above as well as more unambiguously interrogative sentences such as "do you have anything else that you would add to this question, anyone?" (Speech Event 3, 11:59).

Asking questions, however, was not the only method of elicitation of which Student 10 made use. Another technique that she used for discussion moderation was nomination: Student 10 called on specific groupmates of hers to speak. She did this twice during Speech Event 3, which—considering that there were only four other students in the group—means that she nominated 50% of her peers. (One of the other two students voluntarily started speaking when Student 5 suggested that someone should, and the fourth participant responded to a general, nonnominative question asked by Student 10.) Her penchant for nominating her groupmates was made all the more prominent by the fact that no one else in the group did it, making Student 10 the only participant to call someone else's name. In addition to nomination, Student 10 also

engaged in what can be described as answer acceptance: This happened more than once when a participant finished giving their answer to a question, whereupon Student 10 said "OK" to signal that she had noted the answer and seemingly to express acceptance of it before attempting to move the discussion forward by calling on someone else to speak. In the course of Speech Event 3, "OK" was said eight times in total by three participants, and Student 10 uttered the interjection six times. Of Student 10's six OKs, four were used to accept her interlocutors' responses, and a fifth "OK" was a borderline case that would have been in the same category if Student 10 had not asked a follow-up question after it, thereby making it utterance-medial rather than terminatory. An instance of Student 10's discussion moderation occurred when Student 5 had finished speaking (in response to a question that required a description of her target audience when writing a research paper), and Student 10 nodded before saying, "OK. [Student 2], who is your audience?" (Speech Event 3, 3:28); this example illustrates both phenomena as it consisted of a combination of answer acceptance and nomination.

The fourth aspect that made Student 10 a central participant, arguably a moderator, in Speech Event 3 was the provision of clarifications, which she did no fewer than four times. The first clarification she provided differed from the others in the sense that it preceded interaction with members of the group. Student 10 started speaking 12 seconds after the beginning of the breakout room session and immediately indicated that four questions were to be discussed; she then said, "and the first one is, 'who is your target audience?' So, who do you write this paper? Who are you dedicating it to? Well, not dedicating, but you know, what's your target audience? Lay people, academics, teachers" (Speech Event 3, 0:21). The clarification in this example materialised initially in the form of two follow-up questions after the original question, which seemed to elaborate on the question asked by the teacher. The two questions were then followed by self-repair as Student 10 realised that she had inadvertently used the wrong verb. A slightly altered version of the original question was repeated before Student 10 gave her peers a list of three possible answers to choose from, though it is likely that she intended to illustrate the type of answer she had in mind rather than restrict the answers to a choice of three. No one requested this explanation; Student 10 provided it of her own accord—presumably to facilitate the discussion.

Student 10's subsequent clarifications were different as they occurred when she was in conversation with one of her groupmates, and they were given in response to clarification

requests. Thus, these utterance sequences were adjacency pairs (Yule, 1996). All three of Student 10's remaining clarifications were answers given to questions asked by the other participants. Of those clarification requests, two were asked directly after Student 10's turns, so it behoved her to provide clarification because she was the one who had been speaking immediately before the requests, and the requests were no doubt addressed to her; in a sense, those two responses given by Student 10 were extensions of her previous turns. In contrast to those two questions, Student 10 was afforded more leeway to decide whether she would respond when Student 2 asked a question after Student 7's turn; nevertheless, it was Student 10, not Student 7, who gave Student 2 the answer.

Aside from highlighting the somewhat teacherly role that Student 10 adopted in the conversation, the utterances demonstrate typical characteristics of adjacency pairs. It is noteworthy that Student 10 gave short and to-the-point answers (i.e., "yeah" and "yeah, yeah") when she was able to confirm what her interlocutors were asking, whereas a more elaborate answer was needed when Student 10 was unable simply to agree with her groupmate. This can be illustrated through the following example:

> Student 5: So, we have to completely explain about the audience in the paper that we are going to write?
>
> Student 10: No, I mean you don't have to explain about the audience itself, but think of the audience in, you know, when you are writing the paper. (Speech Event 3, 9:00)

In her turn, Student 5 asked a yes–no question, to which the preferred response would normally be yes, but the answer was negative in this case. Student 5's request for information could not be satisfied with a short affirmation, so more information was supplied by Student 10 than a simple no. This would be expected in the case of a dispreferred adjacency pair (Levinson, 1983), but the addition of information beyond the response to the question seems warranted also because Student 5's utterance was arguably not a true yes–no question in this context. The utterance took the form of a yes–no question (sans the auxiliary verb), but it seems to have had the illocutionary force (and certainly the perlocutionary effect) of a clarification request, which would make Student 10's response a contextually appropriate one.

Apart from Student 10's general prominence at several stages of the discussion, another notable segment of Speech Event 3 was an instance of self-repair, which occurred when Student

2 realised that she had misunderstood a question. What made the self-repair remarkable was that the realisation of the mistake happened long after the misunderstanding. In total, Student 2 spoke six times during the conversation, and her first turn was a response to having been nominated by Student 10 (quoted above as Speech Event 3, 3:28). It was to this initial turn that Student 2 returned more than 7 minutes later in order first to clarify whether she had made a mistake and then to correct it: "So audiences, you know, who would read my seminar papers, yeah? … Who would read? Yeah. So, I'm making confusing, and I'm think of research participants. Yeah. So, I think that, uh, yeah, my audience will be, yeah, teachers" (Speech Event 3, 11:15). On the face of it, this does not seem to be an act of self-repair as Student 2 virtually repeated what she had said earlier: "So maybe my target audience can, of course, can be teachers" (Speech Event 3, 3:52). After the first contribution, Student 2 went on to specify teachers at which levels of education (i.e., secondary and tertiary) could be her target audience, so she was not vague about what she meant. Even though her answer was ultimately the same in both cases (i.e., teachers), Student 2 corrected herself because she realised that she had been talking about research participants instead of her potential target audience. The self-repair did not appear to be necessary; furthermore, it is likely that the mistake that was repaired had not even been noticed by the other members of the group. Student 2's interlocutors may have found it difficult to understand what she was trying to correct given that they did not have the benefit of being able to rewind the recording to check what their groupmate had said previously. The fact that Student 2 highlighted that she had misunderstood something seems to run counter to the let-it-pass principle (Firth, 1996): It would have been easier for her not to bring it up, and she would have saved face, but for some reason she corrected a mistake that probably only she knew about.

Finally, there were two aspects of Student 7's participation in Speech Event 2 that proved worthy of attention from the researcher's perspective. The first was that she appeared to be both able and willing to participate in the discussion as she was the first person to start speaking after Student 5 had asked who wanted to start. However, there was a 10-second silence between Student 5's question and Student 7's response. Although Student 7 spoke eventually, she may have felt under pressure to say something. It is, however, a subsequent contribution of Student 7's that turned out to be more interesting because of her awareness of her interlocutors. Wishing to ascertain whether the others were able to follow what she was saying, Student 7 asked an indirect question: "So in my paper, this, erm, you know, to explain what does it mean for your

paper. I don't know if I'm making myself clear" (Speech Event 3, 10:17). By issuing this comprehension check, Student 7 invited her peers to signal if something was unclear to them, and Student 10 responded affirmatively, reassuring Student 7 that what she was saying was comprehensible. Student 7's comprehension check suggests that she was thinking not only of things to say but also of her interlocutors while putting her thoughts into words, and she endeavoured to make herself comprehensible to those who were listening to her.

4.2.3.2.2   The Participants' Perspectives

All five students took part in a stimulated-recall interview to share their views on the discussion, and with the combined length of the SRIs having come to 230 minutes, rich data were yielded on Speech Event 3 from the participants' emic perspectives. The least amount of time had elapsed between the conversation and the recall in the case of Students 7 and 10, who were able to watch the recording and comment on it on the same day as Speech Event 3 had happened. Student 1 did the SRI only 1 day later, whereas Students 2 and 5 shared their recollections of the conversation with the researcher 4 and 5 days later respectively. Citing technical problems, Student 7 was not able to join the SRI with her camera on, but the recall session went through without interruption. The remaining four students participated in the SRI with their cameras on; however, Student 2 experienced technical issues during her SRI, which caused momentary disruption. She found a way to remedy the problem before long.

4.2.3.2.3   Student 1's Perspective

The use of the participants' first language and a bond that had been fostered between students through their shared L1 were brought to the fore by Student 1's comments on the manner in which Student 5 had described the target audience of her research. The question that the students were answering concerned the potential audience at which they might target their seminar papers. In the course of giving her response, Student 5 said that "my main, erm, uh, main participants are students" (Speech Event 3, 2:20). The use of the word "participants" confused Student 1 as it was his understanding that the seminar paper would be a theoretical one, and he saw no need for participants in the absence of an empirical component. Whilst listening to Student 5, Student 1 wished to ascertain whether he was right, but instead of asking Student 5 what she meant, he sought clarity by asking his compatriot Student 7. As Student 1 explained, "I was completely confused … and I wrote [Student 7], like, because we're talking in Spanish obviously, so I talked to her, like, 'do we have to conduct a study, or do we have to just, uh,

theoretical?'" (SRI 16, 6:35). By "talking" to her groupmate, Student 1 meant sending her a private text message via Microsoft Teams as they were listening to Student 5 through the same application. Although this may seem like the digital equivalent of passing notes under the desk, there was potentially more to this act of communication than the simple exchange of information between two students.

Firstly, the episode highlights the multimodality of communication in this online classroom context: Student 1's admission that he had messaged a groupmate revealed that at least two of the participants had been reading and writing text whilst listening to audio and watching video. This is one more channel of information to process than they would have ordinarily had in a face-to-face classroom context—assuming that information from no other source was incoming. Secondly, Student 1 said it was obvious that he and Student 7 communicated with one another in Spanish, which points towards the importance of the students' first language even in an ELF situation. From the perspective of an outside observer, Speech Event 3 seemed to be a discussion carried out entirely in English, but it transpired that there had been parallel channels of communication: English was used as a lingua franca between the students who came from different first-language backgrounds, but when a shared L1 was available, the students preferred using it to English. Finally, the interaction between Students 1 and 7 shows how the here-and-now of the classroom context can be influenced by the broader context of the module and by the students' prior knowledge of each other. Student 1 turned to Student 7 for help not only because they hailed from the same country, but also because he knew that Student 7 was more familiar with the university context than he was: Student 1 at this point had not set foot on the university campus as he was studying online from his home country, and this was his first year. By contrast, Student 7 was far more experienced as she had completed another degree programme at the same university, and Student 1, as a result, valued her opinion. It was, thus, Student 1's background knowledge of his interlocutors that influenced him when making a decision about whom to approach for advice. (Drawing on her experience, Student 7 told Student 1 that she did not believe it was necessary to conduct empirical research for the paper in question and that she also did not understand what Student 5 had meant.)

As Student 10's active role in the moderation of Speech Event 3 was one of the more noticeable features of the interaction between the participants, it did not escape Student 1's attention either. He noticed that Student 10 had been particularly active during the seminar, and

he appreciated the effort: "I was thinking that it's great for someone to take control; otherwise, we were very, like, quiet" (SRI 16, 9:06). Student 1 explained that he had also adopted a similar role in previous discussions, but on this occasion he did not think it necessary to moderate the conversation as his peer was doing it. In fact, Student 1 was among the participants whom Student 10 nominated and asked to share their views on their target audience for the seminar paper. Asked how he had felt about the nomination, Student 1 stated that he had been "fine with that" (SRI 16, 14:46) and even anticipated that he would have to speak next. What happened in Speech Event 3 was consistent with Student 1's schema of a seminar discussion; he realised that Student 10 was in charge of the conversation and knew that moderators tended to speak after everybody else had spoken, so he was not surprised when Student 10 called on him to share his thoughts.

However, Student 1 saw Student 10's eagerness to moderate the discussion from more than one perspective, which seems to have implications for this study as a whole. Student 1, who worked as a teacher, said, "when I'm in class, I also see things like a teacher because I am a teacher" (SRI 16, 9:57). His teacherly view of the proceedings was slightly different in that he thought the other students did not have the opportunity to share their views due to the fact that Student 10 was afforded perhaps "too much voice" (SRI 16, 9:36) not only in this conversation, but more generally in seminar discussions. In other words, Student 10's efforts to keep the discussion going pleased Student 1 in his role as a student, but he thought of the same phenomenon differently as a teacher. He was a student in this exchange, but he could not help relying on his teacherly knowledge of classroom interaction in his interpretation of what was happening. Student 1, then, saw Speech Event 3 from various viewpoints, which appears to suggest that it may be a form of reductionism to claim that he had a single perspective on the discussion. Although the headings in this thesis read "Student #'s Perspective", it may be a more accurate representation of reality to refer in the plural to each student's perspectives. If one person had multiple perspectives on the conversation, the same is bound to be true for all participants (in all discussions) as speakers cannot interpret speech situations with anything other than a complex set of schemata which derive from their knowledge of the world in general. This raises questions about the limitations of empirical research—not only this piece of research, but research on pragmatics at large.

4.2.3.2.4 Student 2's Perspective

As Student 2 made a point of highlighting something she had misunderstood and correcting the mistake by answering the misinterpreted question again, this seemed an important part of Speech Event 3 from her perspective. The importance of the self-repair was confirmed by the fact that she commented on the stimulus at two separate points: when the mistake was made and when corrected. First, Student 2 explained how the misunderstanding had occurred:

> First time, I understand the question was target audience. At that time, I understand the question wrong, and I confused the words, you know, mixing up the words "target audience" with the "research participants". Then I think about the research participants; I answered this question. Then I listened to my classmates' responses, and after that I understood that I answered wrong, and then I again answered the question. (SRI 17, 3:56)

Student 2 did not say why she felt a need to correct the mistake instead of letting it pass unnoticed, but it emerged from her explanation that she inferred from what her groupmates were saying that she had made a mistake. However, she was not satisfied with the way in which she reached this realisation (i.e., all by herself). Student 2 would have expected some guidance from her interlocutors; it was her impression that her fellow students would have "needed to say" (SRI 17, 31:27) that she had misinterpreted the question, but they did not, which led her to the conclusion that "this is, you know, one problem of our communication" (SRI 17, 31:43). Student 2 ventured the opinion that the lack of candour, which resulted in her mistaken interpretation going uncontested, might have been a by-product of the lack of in-person interaction between the members of the group. In Student 2's view, her peers might have been less likely to ignore her mistake if the students had developed a better rapport through having regular face-to-face meetings.

Similarly to the researcher, Student 2 perceived Student 10's demeanour in the conversation to be teacherly. In fact, Student 10 assumed so active a role in discussion moderation as to make Student 2 wonder whether the teacher might have asked Student 10 to deputise for her and lead the discussion on the teacher's behalf. What lent credence to this assumption in Student 2's view was the fact that Student 10 was a home student, making her a more likely candidate for such a position of trust. However, no such arrangement had been made, which Student 2 ought to have known as she received the same instructions (at the same time) for the discussion as Student 10. Overall, Student 10's discussion moderation made a positive

impression on Student 2, for it allowed her to follow the flow of the conversation: "She said, 'OK, first, this one; next, this one; after, that,' and like that. This, you know, guide help me to understand the discussion" (SRI 17, 8:32). This was particularly useful for the management of turn-taking as a person who was nominated would know that they were to speak next. Student 2 believed that the discussion moderation was helpful not only in aiding her comprehension of the conversation but also in bridging the linguistic gaps that she perceived to exist between the participants. Without specifying difficulties, Student 2 said, "nonnative speakers … maybe we don't understand sometimes each other speaking English, maybe, because of the different dialects" (SRI 17, 9:46).

Although Student 10's attempts at discussion moderation were generally well received and appreciated, Student 2 did not regard her peer's responses to what she said equally favourably. In particular, it was Student 10's tendency to engage in what was described above as answer acceptance to which Student 2 objected because she did not see "OK" as a helpful response in most cases. On one occasion, Student 2 was left wondering what Student 10 might have thought of what she had said as she was unable to deduce it from the reaction. As she said, "I was thinking that [Student 10] understand my response or not because … she didn't say some agreement, and just 'OK, OK'" (SRI 17, 20:52). In Student 2's opinion, not only was "OK" a meaningless response in the sense that it conveyed neither agreement nor disagreement, but it also lacked colour. She would have expected expressions of agreement that were charged with emotion (and therefore felt more genuine) or somehow reflected the personality of the speaker(s). She believed that the participants' reactions should have included more explicit displays of emotion and encouragement for one another as this is what would have happened in an ordinary conversation (i.e., outside the classroom). In Speech Event 3, however, nary a word of enthused support was imparted, which Student 2 found lamentable.

The theme of the participants' idiolects resurfaced when Student 2 shared her reflections on the comprehensibility of Student 10's speech. The comment on differences between the students' Englishes was offered without elicitation when Student 2 recalled what had happened in a particular exchange with Student 10. During Speech Event 3, Student 10 asked Student 2 a follow-up question after hearing what the latter had to say about her (misunderstood) target audience. The question was, "do you think this would change the language that you would use in your paper or the way you would, you know, explain things and, you know, open up concepts

and introducing them, would that change?" (Speech Event 3, 5:13), which was followed by 7 seconds of hesitation before Student 2 began to formulate an answer. Her difficulty in answering the question was noticeable as she was searching for words and inserted several fillers into her speech; in the end, she did not answer the question but talked about sources instead. In the retrospective interview, Student 2 explained why there had been a discrepancy between the question and her answer: "At that time, I understood she was asking a question, but I didn't answer her question very well because, you know, in fact, in reality I didn't understand the Hungarian students speaking English very well" (SRI 17, 17:04). Student 2 listed three reasons why it had been difficult for her to understand her peer's speech: length, speed, and intonation. According to Student 2, Student 10's sentences were long and delivered faster than she would have preferred; she shared her general impression that Hungarian students tended to speak English quickly. However, it was her view on Student 10's intonation that gave rise to a pertinent observation on her own (i.e., Student 2's) language use in ELF communication:

> [Student 10]'s speaking doesn't have any intonation. … It is difficult to catch her listening. … But when I speak in English, I, especially with international students, I try to be clear in each word, and that's why I pronounce each word very clearly. So, I hope that maybe my classmates understand my English 100%. But I don't know which one is right or wrong because, you know, it is a discussion between the nonnative speakers, ELF, English as a lingua franca, so yeah. And then I don't know deliberately speaking slowly and deliberately telling, you know, pronouncing words clearly. It is, of course, not real-life speak, you know. Authentic real-life we never say that. (SRI 17, 18:44)

One of the characteristics of Student 2's language use that she highlighted was accommodation, which is an important part of ELF communication (Jenkins, 2022) and, indeed, of communication in any context. The excerpt above is indicative of Student 2's ELF awareness given that she claimed to modify her speech to suit her communicative needs when conversing with interlocutors from diverse first-language backgrounds. It is interesting that Student 2 readily accepted that the speech of people from certain backgrounds (e.g., Hungarian speakers of English) was difficult to understand, but she seemed to dismiss the possibility that her own speech—despite her striving for clear enunciation—may have been equally challenging for her interlocutors to process. The contrast that Student 2 drew between the incomprehensibility of Student 10's speech and her own efforts to make her speech easier to understand appears to have

been underlain by the belief that the difficulty she experienced in speech comprehension was the result of lack of trying on her interlocutor's part. Despite this contradiction, Student 2's comments on accommodation seemed to imply that she thought there was a need for utterances in ELF interaction to be fashioned with recipient-orientedness in mind. It ought to be added, with regard to what Student 2 said about "authentic real-life" speech, that the module included authenticity as a topic of discussion, so it is likely that the words Student 2 chose to describe her use of English were influenced by what she had heard during previous seminar discussions. It is, nevertheless, noteworthy that Student 2 did not believe classroom communication through the medium of ELF was similar to communication in other contexts (i.e., "real life").

4.2.3.2.5 *Student 5's Perspective*

Unlike the other participants, Student 5 did not stop the stimulus to comment on it. Therefore, it fell to the researcher to elicit information on what she had been thinking at the time of the discussion. To this end, the stimulus was stopped seven times, and Student 5 was asked questions about the excerpts. The first of these targeted an utterance that Student 5 had made; it was a question asked early on in the discussion: "Who wants to start?" (Speech Event 3, 0:51). No one in particular appeared to want to start as the question was followed by 10 seconds of silence. When asked whether she had wanted to avoid being the first person to speak, Student 5 said that she would actually have been happy to start, but she asked the question to allow her groupmates to speak before her. It was because she "saw that they are thinking about something" (SRI 20, 2:14), and this led her to believe that they had something to say and were formulating their responses. Student 5 did not comment on the lengthy pause after her question, but she said she would have carried on speaking if no one had responded. Eventually, Student 7 did.

Student 2's misunderstanding of a question and her subsequent answer were also discussed in the SRI. The issue in Speech Event 3 was that Student 2 was talking about her research participants instead of her target audience, which the other students did not correct at the time. It seemed as if they had not noticed it, but Student 5 said that she had noticed the misunderstanding; however, she assumed Student 2's response would follow a similar pattern as hers did. Student 5 answered the same question by first describing the focus of her research and then explaining who might benefit from reading about it. Thus, Student 5 did not immediately see Student 2's mix-up of the terms as a mistake because she was waiting for information on Student 2's target audience to be added, which would have rendered what Student 2 said earlier

relevant. This happened only much later (i.e., in a separate turn), but Student 5 remembered it as she said she believed Student 2 had corrected the mistake.

In response to being asked what she had thought about Student 10's role in the discussion, Student 5 spoke approvingly of Student 10's voluntary discussion moderation and highlighted the importance of familiarity with the broader context in which the interaction was situated:

> I don't have any problem with it. And since I think [Student 10]'s Hungarian, and when somebody from Hungary take the role, main role, in a group, I'm more happier because she knows the context; she knows how to do it; she was in Hungarian university before me, so she's more experienced than me. I am happy. (SRI 20, 9:54)

The quotation above illustrates how knowledge of the broader university context was deemed relevant by Student 5 in the narrower context of Speech Event 3. As she was among those overseas students who had not physically been to the university at the time of the discussion due to travel restrictions, Student 5 had less experience of studying at this university and participating in seminar discussions than Student 10, who was a graduate of the university and was now doing postgraduate coursework at her alma mater. The difference in the amount of experience each student had in the context should not have influenced their ability to contribute to the conversation because they all had access to the readings which were being discussed. Nevertheless, prior knowledge of the university context was apparently an underlying component of the talk exchange—at least in Student 5's view. In more general terms, Student 5 seems to have believed that her schema of a university discussion was not as applicable to this context as Student 10's, so she was pleased to see her experienced groupmate in charge.

4.2.3.2.6   *Student 7's Perspective*

For Student 7, participation in Speech Event 3 was characterised by three main emotions: anxiety, embarrassment, and relief. The first of these was induced mainly by the possibility of the occurrence of a protracted period of silence. Student 7 made it clear that she had wanted very much to avoid silence as the thought of having to sit in silence filled her with unease. This is why Student 7 was the first to respond when Student 5 had asked her groupmates who wanted to start answering the discussion question. As noted earlier, 10 seconds elapsed between Student 5's question and the time when Student 7 started speaking. The silence aroused anxiety in Student 7 and prompted her to break it: "I didn't want to start, but nobody was speaking, and I just got

anxious. … At that moment, I just [inaudible] the awkward silence, and I rushed to speak" (SRI 14, 2:01). Unexpectedly, Student 7's thoughts during Speech Event 3 were also influenced by the SRI in which she had participated: She remembered telling the researcher about her tendency to want to avoid awkward silences as she was trying to avoid another silence. This increased her awareness of the silence avoidance practices in which she tended to engage and was engaging. Not long after this episode, she reiterated her desire "to avoid the awkward silence" (SRI 14, 4:32), which she achieved by speaking even when she was not sure what to say. Essentially, Student 7 admitted having spoken for the sake of speaking.

In contrast to instances when she spoke only to prevent the discussion from grinding to a halt, Student 7 made what she considered a real contribution to the conversation when Students 1 and 10 were explaining to Student 5 what it entailed to write with one's target audience in mind. Joining in with an explanation of her own, Student 7 gave Student 5 an example to illustrate the point being made. This, as she later explained in the SRI, was different from her previous contributions in that she "wasn't just talking for the sake of talking; I was actually invested in the conversation, and it was something that I know, like, I was interested in it" (SRI 14, 17:18). Possible indicators of her interest include the facts that she spoke spontaneously (i.e., not after a lengthy pause) and that her speech was more fluent than before.

While the explanation of the concept of a target audience relieved some of the stress Student 7 had been experiencing and made her show genuine interest in the conversation, the description of her own target audience caused embarrassment to her. This was because she expected that her groupmates would indicate that they agree with what she was saying. Student 7's answer was that her target audience for seminar papers was the teacher for whose module she had to submit the paper. What made Student 7 feel uncomfortable was the fact that no one seemed to share her view:

> When I said the first thing like, "I tend to write for the teacher", I kind of got a bit embarrassed because nobody agreed. I thought it would be like an agreeable… like everybody would say, "oh yeah" or maybe a head nod. I was like, "oh maybe I'm the only one who does that", and I got a little bit embarrassed. (SRI 14, 3:27)

The moments of embarrassment that Student 7 had to withstand after surmising that her peers wrote differently from her were in contrast to the relief she felt when Student 10 gave the impression at a later stage of the discussion that she agreed with Student 7. She summarised the

experience as, "I remember when [Student 10] said yes, I kind of felt a bit relieved because I was afraid that I was saying some nonsense before" (SRI 14, 18:14). Student 7 saw Student 10's agreement as an affirmation of what she had said, and this helped her regain the self-confidence that she had lost previously when no one agreed with her. With confidence lost and regained, there was some fluctuation in Student 7's self-belief and, thus, willingness to participate in the discussion, which she described as "a little bit of a roller-coaster, like an up and down of confidence" (SRI 14, 19:17).

Relief was once again the emotion that Student 7 mentioned feeling in relation to Student 10's discussion moderation. Student 7 was both relieved and happy to see that Student 10 took charge of the discussion as it meant that she did not have to be an active participant in the conversation and assume the role of a moderator, which she would otherwise have felt duty bound to do. As she said, "I was glad that she was asking questions and kind of directing the meeting … I was like, 'OK, she's like in charge; I don't have to'" (SRI 14, 10:56). The theme of silence avoidance recurred at this stage of Speech Event 3 as well: Student 7 felt that she would have had to step in and moderate the discussion if Student 10 had not done it. Although she did not mention it, Student 7 could have been expected to lead the discussion if Student 10 had not been inclined to do so given that they were the only two students in the group who had attended the university before (i.e., the others are likely to have seen them as experienced members of the group).

4.2.3.2.7 Student 10's Perspective

Despite having been the most active participant in Speech Event 3, Student 10 did not have much to say on her discussion moderation, though she highlighted a few interesting points. Even though Student 10 was the first to speak in Speech Event 3, she said that she had been waiting for the others to start the discussion; this did not happen. Student 10 then started off the conversation by saying, "OK, so we have four questions, I think. Right?" (Speech Event 3, 0:12), but it was not apparent to an outside observer whether she expected a confirmatory answer at this point because she continued speaking and read out the first of the four questions. Student 10 disclosed that she had, indeed, hoped that one of her groupmates would be prompted by her question to join in:

> I saw that it was not taking off, so I take the floor. Here, when I asked, "right?", I would
> have expected someone to take it in hand, so to take it from me because I am not

confident; maybe someone else is more confident and will take it. That was the reason for asking. (SRI 15, 2:15)

The lack of self-confidence—presumably with regard to the questions rather than in general—which she talked about was noticeable also in her delivery: She did not speak with great fluency; she appeared to be searching for words as she uttered the first few sentences. Thus, some hesitation was detectable in Student 10's speech; however, it was impossible to infer from what Student 10 was saying in Speech Event 3 that she was thinking about the stimulated-recall interview (i.e., SRI 7) in which she had discussed with the researcher the very thing she was doing now: discussion moderation. Having done the SRI, Student 10 was influenced by it during Speech Event 3, and she was more aware of assuming the role of the moderator than she would have been otherwise. This is yet another example of the chaotic nature of this context of communication: Instead of being influenced only by what happened in the classroom, the participants' utterances were affected by a range of phenomena, including their memories.

Although her discussion moderation was a conspicuous aspect of Speech Event 3, Student 10 hinted that it had, at times, been done in an unplanned fashion. For example, when one of the questions had been discussed and it was time to move on to the next one, Student 10 asked, "do you have anything else that you would add to this question, anyone?" (Speech Event 3, 11:59). Student 10 queried whether her groupmates wished to say anything else when everyone had seemingly shared what they wanted to in response to the question being discussed. Asking the question was a spur-of-the-moment decision; as she revealed, "here again, I inadvertently took on the role of the moderator" (SRI 15, 20:57). Even though she would have listened to her peers if they had wanted to add something, Student 10 did not ask the question to elicit additional comments from the others in the group. Instead, her intention was to ensure that no further remarks would be made because "at this point, I thought it was all very well that everyone understood it; however, I may have wanted to bring it to a conclusion as I was thinking that it was time to move on" (SRI 15, 21:46). In this instance, Student 10's locution and illocutionary force may be labelled as incongruous in the sense that form and function were at odds with each other. The questions she asked looked like an invitation to speak; however, the intention behind it was the very opposite.

The emic data from SRI 15 can also be used to shine some light on a segment of the discussion in which Student 10 asked Student 5 questions whilst the latter was describing her

target audience for the seminar paper. Student 5 declared that teachers would comprise her target audience, but Student 10 was not satisfied with the level of specificity and asked teachers in what context of education her interlocutor had meant. Student 5 attempted to provide some clarification by saying, "actually teachers who are, uh, teaching in, erm, private English language institutes" (Speech Event 3, 2:57), but she was found wanting in her explanation, so Student 10 asked her again what she meant, this time giving her a binary choice between teachers who teach adults and teachers who teach children. Reflecting on the exchange, Student 10 expressed dissatisfaction with the answer she had received from Student 5 and thought it had been "contradictory" (SRI 15, 7:38); nevertheless, she accepted it and did not call for further clarification because "I felt it was not my place to criticise or comment on what she was saying. Perhaps it was not necessary to go into so much detail about what she said" (SRI 15, 8:02). Student 10 also allowed for the possibility that Student 5 might have misspoken and did not mean exactly what she said. Student 10's remarks on her perspective are valuable as they provide insight into the thought process behind her questions, which remained hidden during Speech Event 3. At the end of the exchange, Student 10 seemed to accept Student 5's explanation (answer acceptance quoted above as Speech Event 3, 3:28), but the SRI revealed that despite what she said, she had not been completely satisfied with her groupmate's answers.

One of the reasons why she took an active role in discussion moderation was that, unlike the others, Student 10 was in possession of the specific schema needed to answer the question in a way that satisfied the teacher's expectations, and—importantly—she was aware of her knowledge. It was because Student 10 had been taught by the teacher before and was therefore familiar with her teaching style as well as with some of the issues on which she liked to focus in her seminars. As Student 10 explained, "I remembered from a previous class what the professor had said she meant when she asked that question" (SRI 15, 10:42). Not only did Student 10 know what the teacher had meant by asking who the students' target audience might be, but she also realised that her peers did not understand the question in the way the teacher had meant it. This explains her tendency to accept her interlocutors' contributions to the conversation by saying no more than "OK". For example, Student 10 thought when she said "OK" in response to Student 2's contribution that "this answer of hers was not necessarily relevant here, and I am not really responding to it here" (SRI 15, 11:26). The short interjection, then, was used by Student 10 as a placeholder for a genuine reaction. She wanted to withhold her ideas from the discussion

until a suitable moment as she did not wish to affect her groupmates' responses by revealing what she thought of their answers. Apparently, it was also the reason why Student 10 had asked each of her groupmates to share their thoughts on the discussion question before she did:

> I was interested in the others' answers because I knew what the answer to the question really was, so to say. So, I tried to get through everyone first before I gave my answer as I did not want to influence them with what I thought. (SRI 15, 12:00)

Student 10's views exemplify the role schemata can play in the interpretation of utterances and in passing judgement on them. Student 10 would have been less likely to deem her peers' contributions irrelevant if she had not had the schema of a correct answer to the teacher's question. The background knowledge which Student 10 used to make sense of the situation was very context-specific in that it was not simply an understanding of what a response to a question should be like, but she knew what responses would be acceptable specifically to the question they were to discuss in Speech Event 3. Prior knowledge played a crucial role in shaping Student 10's perception of correctness in this context despite the fact that the teacher's instructions for the discussion should have been sufficient to demarcate the boundaries of acceptability. Nevertheless, Student 10 reached her own conclusions by applying her background knowledge of similar speech situations to the specific context of Speech Event 3. In other words, the teacher's instructions—though ostensibly specific—were approximate, and Student 10 needed to rely on her schemata to understand the question and respond to it. The other participants are bound to have acted in the same way as Student 10 (i.e., drawing on their unique sets of schemata); as a consequence, they arrived at somewhat different interpretations of the teacher's question, thereby giving different answers. From Student 10's perspective, those other answers were not correct, and the teacher, having instilled the schema into Student 10, may well have shared Student 10's view. Nevertheless, it is likely that the other students' responses were internally consistent with their own schemata, making them equally correct from their perspectives.

4.2.3.3 Summary

Although there were overlaps between the SRI participants' comments in terms of time (i.e., on which segments of the stimulus the comments were made), the students' emic perspectives rarely coalesced. For instance, three out of the five participants had recollections to share within the first minute of the conversation, but they all seem to have been preoccupied with

different issues at that stage of Speech Event 3: Student 1 was thinking about the discussion question itself; Student 7 was concerned about the potential awkward silence; Student 10 was thinking about the fact that she was speaking again in addition to expecting one of her peers to respond to her prompt. In short, at almost no point did the students think alike, but that is to be expected. The times at which the participants stopped the stimulus to comment on it are summarised in Table 12 below.

Table 12

Points at Which SRI Participants Commented on the Stimulus

Participant	Comments made at								
Student 1	0:42	1:33	2:29	4:50	6:26	7:39	9:28	10:00	11:13
	12:36	13:45	14:30	15:04	15:27	16:55	17:13	17:35	18:03
	19:08								
Student 2	1:39	3:13	5:05	5:30	5:58	7:51	11:46	12:34	13:02
	14:03	14:13	17:01						
Student 5	no voluntary remarks; comments elicited by the researcher at seven points								
Student 7	0:40	1:25	1:35	1:54	2:43	4:03	8:39	10:19	10:47
	13:25	14:36	16:01	16:28	16:55				
Student 10	0:29	3:31	5:32	12:03	15:04				

One of the most conspicuous features of Speech Event 3 was Student 10's active participation in the discussion; therefore, it can serve as a focal point of the summary of some similarities and differences between the participants' emic perspectives. All students spoke approvingly of Student 10's attempts at maintaining orderliness by moderating the discussion, though each participant had a unique perception of their groupmate's teacherly behaviour. Aside from expressing appreciation for Student 10's discussion moderation, Student 1 talked about his double perspective on what was going on in the classroom: He looked upon the proceedings simultaneously as a student and as a teacher, which resulted in different interpretations of what was happening. Student 2 had a somewhat ambivalent attitude towards Student 10's active role in Speech Event 3 as she liked some aspects of it, but the use of "OK" as a sign of answer acceptance was too bland for her taste, and she pointed out that there had been comprehension issues due to her unfamiliarity with what she believed were idiosyncrasies of the intonation patterns exhibited by Hungarian speakers of English. By contrast, Student 5 was decidedly happy for the discussion to be led by Student 10, and she highlighted the importance of knowledge of the context in which the discussion took place; she valued Student 10's experience and thus thought it right that she should be in charge. Student 7, who viewed the prospect of an awkward

silence with trepidation, was relieved to see Student 10 lead the conversation as it meant that someone was speaking. Student 10 herself was aware of her taking centre stage, but she did it begrudgingly after realising that her groupmates were unwilling to speak unless prompted. Importantly, Student 10 relied on her background knowledge and relevant schemata to navigate their way through the discussion and steer her peers towards what she believed were the expected outcomes. As opposed to the participants, the researcher did not have personal views on Student 10's discussion moderation but recognised it as a prominent feature of the conversation due to the frequency of her turns and the overall impact she had on the discussion.

4.2.4 *Speech Event 4*

4.2.4.1 Description of the Speech Event

The conversation hereafter referred to as Speech Event 4 took place on 6 May in the second of two breakout rooms in which group discussions were held concurrently (with the other conversation having been Speech Event 3). The length of the video recording of Speech Event 4 is 19 minutes and 5 seconds, and the discussion appears to have been captured in its entirety. The number of students who took part in the discussion was five; some background information on the participants is summarised in Table 13 below.

Table 13

Background Information About the Participants in Speech Event 4

	Student 3	Student 4	Student 6	Student 8	Student 9
Age	32	27	43	32	24
Gender	Female	Male	Male	Female	Female
First language	Vietnamese	English	Kurdish	Burmese	Arabic

The researcher was not present in the breakout room, and neither was the teacher of the group. Student 6 was able to participate with audio only, whereas the four other students joined the discussion with audio and video. Participation in the breakout room session was not without technical difficulties for everyone; Student 8's audio and video feeds were frozen on more than one occasion, and her response to a question was delayed because of this; she also temporarily dropped out of the conversation. Student 9 did not seem to experience technical issues at her end, but the audio signal she transmitted was breaking up at several points when she was speaking; as a result, it was occasionally difficult to comprehend her speech.

4.2.4.2 Analysis of the Speech Event

4.2.4.2.1   *The Researcher's Perspective*

For most of the discussion, the sequence of turns was characterised by linear progression: One student spoke and then finished speaking; thereafter, another student continued with their turn. The discreteness of turns is likely, at least in part, to have been brought about by the medium of the discussion; the computers through which communication was mediated imposed limitations on the participants' ability to provide one another with feedback (e.g., in the form of backchanneling) or to produce nonverbal reactions (e.g., nonlexical vocal responses or facial expressions). It was, thus, easier for a person wishing to speak to wait until their interlocutor has clearly reached the end of their turn than to try to find gaps in the other person's turn during which it would be suitable to interject. However, there were a few instances when the participants spoke in tandem or when one person spoke on either side of a pause, which meant that it was less than straightforward to determine the precise number of the students' turns. For example, Student 4 responded to what Student 9 had said by expressing his opinion on the issue between 15:30 and 16:06, and it was followed by 7 seconds of silence before Student 4 realised that none of his peers wanted to respond, so he continued speaking at 16:13, but he changed the topic slightly and was asking his groupmates a question. It is debatable whether such contributions to the discussion should be regarded as a single turn or as two turns.

Nevertheless, the minimum number of each speaker's turns can be calculated using the most conservative tally: If a student's utterances that might potentially be two turns based on function are counted as one, the problem of overestimation can be avoided. Using this principle, the number of times each student had spoken was counted, and a total number of 40 turns was identified, but the number would have been higher if nothing from the transcript had been excluded; some parts (e.g., overlaps or false starts) were not included in the count. Even a cursory examination of the conversational turns taken by the students makes it inescapably clear that Student 4 was the central participant in Speech Event 4. With the exception of Student 4, all participants made fewer than 10 contributions to the discussion. Student 3 spoke the fewest times: She had only three turns. Students 6 and 8 each had six turns, and Student 9 spoke seven times. By contrast, the number of Student 4's turns was 18; his contributions accounted for 45% of all conversational turns. In other words, Student 4 spoke approximately half of the time, whereas the other half of the discussion time was divided between four students.

Student 4's dominance over Speech Event 4 manifested itself in his efforts to moderate the discussion in two major ways: He led the conversation by introducing the questions to be discussed and nominated his peers to speak. No sooner had the recording been started than Student 4 provided impetus for the conversation to commence first by suggesting which of the four questions to discuss and then by asking the specific question. After thanking one of his groupmates for starting the recording, Student 4 put the question to his peers, engaging in self-repair as he formulated it: "Who do we think… who's the audience… who's the intended audience supposed to be?" (Speech Event 4, 0:21). It was apparent from this point onwards that Student 4 had taken charge of the discussion, and this seemed to set the tone for the rest of Speech Event 4. In the course of the talk exchange, Student 4 produced four further utterances that had the perlocutionary effect of controlling the direction of the discussion. These included suggestions such as "I think we can move on to plagiarism now" (Speech Event 4, 5:10) as well as questions such as "What about the rest of you guys? Are there any other APA issues that you encounter?" (Speech Event 4, 16:14). At the end of the discussion, leave-taking was also signalled by Student 4 ("I guess we're going back now, guys, so see you soon", Speech Event 4, 18:40), though the decision to close the breakout room session rested with the teacher.

In addition to the introduction of the questions, nomination was also used by Student 4 to facilitate the discussion. After asking the first question (quoted above as Speech Event 4, 0:21), he did not specify who should answer it; on that occasion, it was Student 9 who gave an answer—voluntarily. Afterwards, however, Student 4 nominated all of the remaining three members of the group. There was clear structural similarity between the utterances he used to this end: All three acts of nomination took the form of interrogative sentences that included the first name of the participant whom Student 4 wished to involve in the conversation. The structure can be illustrated through the second sentence Student 4 used to make his peers speak: "What do you think, [Student 3]? What are your thoughts about the audience?" (Speech Event 4, 2:32). One of these acts of nomination consisted only of a standalone question (i.e., "what do you think") and the nominee's name, whereas the other two included a follow-up question as in the example above. Student 4's consistency in using the "what do you think + name" interrogative structure to nominate his peers was maintained despite the fact that there was some temporal distance between the utterances. The first and the second questions occurred a minute and a half apart, whereas the final nomination was issued 47 seconds after the second one.

Another aspect of the interaction which accentuated Student 4's role in the conversation was that his groupmates appeared to treat Student 4 with a degree of deference. Not only did the others wait for him to moderate the discussion (in the sense that no one else did it), but they also turned to him for guidance on the issues that were being discussed. For instance, Student 8 was seemingly requesting advice when she asked Student 4 the following question: "When we take notes, and, you know, like when we collect the literature, you know, do you normally, uh, write down the reference with the notes or only after the writing up the whole paper?" (Speech Event 4, 16:29). It is likely that Student 4 was deemed an expert as his peers knew that he taught academic writing, and the topics of the discussion (e.g., referencing or the target audience for research papers) fell within that broad category. The other members of the group had less experience in scholarly composition; therefore, they valued Student 4's input. Their appreciation was expressed overtly: They thanked Student 4 for some of his contributions. For example, when Student 4 had offered advice to his groupmates on the tone to be used in the seminar paper, Student 6 responded with gratitude:

> Student 4: And we've been reading this stuff from the [name of periodical], and the [name of periodical] is kind of a more teacher focused journal. So maybe, kind of, using this same tone, I think, would also be good for this paper as well.
>
> Student 6: Yeah. Thank you. Thank you, [Student 4]. Thank you. Yes. (Speech Event 4, 2:05)

Although there were not many expressions of thanks made, the majority went to Student 4. In total, "thank you" was uttered six times in Speech Event 4; one of these was said by Student 4 himself, but the remaining five thank-yous were addressed to him.

The importance of schemata and personal experience was underlined by several comments made in the course of Speech Event 4. The students' tendency to formulate their utterances with reference to their schemata became noticeable mostly when they had to share their views on the discussion questions. There were eight instances when the participants contributed to the discussion by drawing on their relevant background knowledge and explicitly mentioning it. After a brief exchange of ideas on how plagiarism can be avoided, for example, Student 4 said,

> erm, and then yeah, I, I think also there might be some cultural differences. I don't know. I think that maybe, uh, 'cause what, what I've noticed from my, my students here at

[name of university], I have a lot of Chinese students, and I often encounter plagiarism issues with them. And maybe it's just because, I don't know, maybe back home it was never discussed with them, or maybe that that's why I don't know, but this is… most of the plagiarism I see comes from my Chinese students. (Speech Event 4, 8:59)

What was interesting linguistically about this turn from the researcher's perspective was that Student 4's speech was peppered with hedging and hesitation. There were some nonlexical fillers (e.g., "uh") and repetition (e.g., "I, I" and "what, what") that seemed to indicate that Student 4 was either searching for words or was not confident in what he wanted to say. Uncertainty was expressed overtly three times when he said, "I don't know", and he engaged in adverbial hedging four times by saying "maybe" as well as in modal hedging once by saying "might". Student 4 also said "I think" twice, which could have been intended as a hedging device, but it may equally have been a filler. What was interesting pragmatically about the utterance was that Student 4 said it (i.e., not the person who said it but the fact that it was said). This was a response made as part of a dialogue between Students 4 and 6 about the role of paraphrasing in the avoidance of plagiarism; prior to Student 4's utterance, there was no mention either of cultural differences or of students from particular countries. The participants had been discussing source use and plagiarism, and then, seemingly out of nowhere, Student 4 introduced the theme of cultural differences and argued that such differences may be an underlying factor in academic misconduct. The utterance seemed to foreground the participant's own perspective and impose it on the discussion (i.e., once he introduced a new aspect of the topic, the conversation went in that direction). Although it is not possible for an outsider to determine the precise illocutionary force of what Student 4 said (as it would be in the case of, e.g., performative sentences), his utterance illustrates how he brought his previous knowledge into this context and made it relevant by applying it to what was being discussed.

As mentioned above, the remark that Student 4 based on his teaching experience caused the discussion to change course slightly. It seems that Student 4's words activated Student 9's schema of Chinese students, and she happened to have some personal experience that she considered relevant in this context. Therefore, instead of addressing the point made by Student 4, Student 9 told the group an anecdote based on her previous experience. Her response was,

OK. Uh, I know I just about this, the Chinese people in particular. I lived with a Chinese flatmate for a year and uh, he was doing his, uh, uh, MA, erm, and … he was rejected the

first time when he submitted because yes, it turned out that is like, most of it is plagiarised. (Speech Event 4, 9:54)

Linguistically, Student 9's utterance differed from what Student 4 had said in that she used less hedging while she was formulating her sentences. It is, then, a more forthright statement on the same topic than the one made by Student 4. Pragmatically, however, it may be more interesting to examine the stage of the discussion at which she chose to say this and the possible reasons for doing so. Student 9 shared her story with the rest of the group only after she had heard that Student 4 had had similar experience. It may be argued that Student 9 would not have told this story if she had not heard what Student 4 said earlier. After all, Student 9's turn was a response to Student 4's, and she did not seem to want to talk about her erstwhile flatmate at any point earlier in the discussion. It is likely to have been the case because her personal experience would not have been relevant earlier on. It was the introduction of cultural differences and East Asian students that expanded the context sufficiently for Student 9 to be able to share the story without making her interlocutors wonder whether it was relevant. It is precisely the newfound relevance that appears to have enabled Student 9 to share the story, thereby satisfying the maxim of Relation (Grice, 1975).

It seems, then, that Student 4's initial contribution about his students had two effects on the discussion. Firstly, he activated a relevant schema in Student 9's mind, thus reminding her of something to share. The keywords in Student 4's turn that are likely to have acted as schema activators (Widdowson, 2007) and prompted Student 9 to say what she did were "Chinese students" and "plagiarism". Secondly, Student 4's utterance altered the context of the discussion and broadened the scope of relevance, which allowed Student 9 to tell her groupmates about her former cohabitant. The first of these (i.e., schema activation) seems to have happened, but there is no hard evidence for it; neither does it seem possible to obtain such evidence as it would require intrusion into Student 9's mind. It is the researcher's contention that not even stimulated recall could credibly shed light on schema activation as speakers are unlikely to be fully conscious of the mental processes that underlie it. The investigation of the process of schema activation by empirical means may thus lie beyond the confines of feasibility. By contrast, the second effect of Student 4's utterance is observable: The fact that Student 9's story did not appear to be out of place from the hearer's perspective shows that the context of the conversation had shifted enough by the time Student 9 decided to tell the story to accommodate it. In this

respect, the researcher or any other outside observer is a hearer as much as the participants of the conversation were; therefore, their judgements about relevance are equally valid. The effect Student 4's contribution had on the discussion is also illustrative of the malleable nature of context: An utterance (possibly as brief as a single word) may change the context of a conversation and modify the participants' perceptions of relevance.

4.2.4.2.2   The Participants' Perspectives

Insight into the participants' emic perspectives on Speech Event 4 was gained through four follow-up interviews: Students 3, 4, 8, and 9 participated in stimulated-recall sessions, during which they watched the recording of the conversation in full and commented on it. Unfortunately, Student 6 was not able to take part in an SRI; his point of view, therefore, was left unexplored. Out of those who watched the stimulus, Student 9 did so first; her SRI took place 4 days after Speech Event 4. Students 3 and 4 both commented on the conversation 5 days after it had happened, whereas Student 8 shared her recollections of the discussion a full week after the event. All students participated in the SRI with their cameras on.

4.2.4.2.3   Student 3's Perspective

What seems to emerge as an overarching theme from the emic data provided by Student 3 is that she related most aspects of Speech Event 4 to her own version of reality. In other words, her schemata of specific phenomena and her general background knowledge influenced Student 3's interpretation of what went on in the breakout room session. This can be illustrated through examples such as the way in which Student 3 regarded Student 4 and his efforts at discussion moderation. Instead of considering what was happening in the classroom in that specific situation only, Student 3 formed an opinion on the proceedings by drawing on her schematic knowledge of how these discussion sessions normally unfolded:

> In this discussion, he acted like a leader because he always acts like a leader, and we … I don't know how about the others, but I have that in my mind. I always let him say first, and he lead the conversation, the discussion. And in this conversation, he acts as usual. (SRI 19, 4:10)

It is noteworthy that Student 3's perception of Student 4's discussion moderation appears to have been so firmly anchored in her schema of the general classroom context that she did not show much interest in the actual reason(s) why Student 4 led the discussion on this occasion. She believed that he led the conversation because he always did; that is, Student 3 was aware of

Student 4's tendency to take the lead, and what she saw in this context was congruent with her previous experience, so she reached a conclusion about her peer's actions without considering how the other members of the group behaved or what the questions to be discussed were. Nevertheless, Student 3 was asked whether she had any thoughts as to why Student 4 had led the discussion, and she did. The response she provided had implications for communication in this ELF context. On the reasons for Student 4's discussion moderation, Student 3 said,

> first, because of his knowledge. He seem to be knowledgeable about everything. Second, he's the native speaker, and sometimes I want to express the same thing, but I cannot use the words that… I mean I can't completely express my idea, but he can do that. (SRI 19, 5:37)

The researcher's view that the other students showed deference to Student 4 seems to be borne out by what Student 3 said; she looked upon him as both knowledgeable and articulate, which is why she was inclined to listen to what Student 4 had to say before expressing her own views. However, the fact that some of that deference derived from Student 4's status as a native speaker of English could not have been established without Student 3's input because at no stage did it feature overtly in the discussion (i.e., Student 4's L1 background was neither mentioned nor alluded to at any point during Speech Event 4). Nevertheless, Student 3's comments convey the impression that language proficiency was a crucial factor influencing the dynamics of communication in the breakout room. Student 3 was aware of Student 4's adeptness at communicating ideas in English and attributed it to his being a native speaker of the language. What is more, she considered her own English skills to be deficient compared to Student 4's competence: She explicitly stated that she failed, on occasion, to communicate in English as well as she wanted to, whereas it did not happen to Student 4, who was a native speaker. It is to be noted, however, that Student 3 is likely to have based her views on personal experience rather than on stereotypes. The students at this point had attended the majority of the lessons of the module; in fact, Speech Event 4 was part of the penultimate lesson in the semester. Therefore, Student 3 had had several opportunities to work with Student 4, and she may even have encountered a situation in which she struggled to articulate something that Student 4 was able to say.

The importance of Student 3's personal experience in her interpretation of various other points of Speech Event 4 was foregrounded by the SRI data. For example, when Student 4

suggested moving on to the discussion question about plagiarism, Student 3 took an interest in what was being said owing to having been personally affected by the issue. In the previous semester, Student 3 had submitted a seminar paper which did not stand up to scrutiny and proved unintentionally to have included plagiarised sections. Student 3 was warned at the time, and the experience made her focused on the avoidance of plagiarism. When they started to discuss plagiarism, she was listening with this experience in mind, and she explained that "I had the problem, so I need to listen from other people so that I can avoid it next time" (SRI 19, 13:01). The unpleasant incident made Student 3 a listener rather than a contributor, and it seems to have affected her focus as she was listening specifically to find out more about techniques that she would need to employ in order to avoid plagiarism. If she had never committed academic misconduct, this segment of the conversation would doubtless have had a different and less personal impact on her. In a similar vein, Student 3's personal experience was the primary determinant of her focus when, towards the end of the discussion, Student 4 shared an anecdote about students of his who had copied references from research papers without making sure that the references were in the correct format. Student 3 was able to relate to what Student 4 was describing due to having done it herself. As she said, "I understand what he said, and yeah, it's a little bit like attracts my attention" (SRI 19, 32:01) because "it produced a link with my experience" (SRI 19, 33:37).

Student 3 reported experiencing different feelings whilst listening to two related utterances from the same segment of Speech Event 4, and it was, once again, her schemata that appeared to be the source of difference. When Student 4 mentioned his observation that Chinese students tended to encounter more difficulty than others when using sources (quoted above as Speech Event 4, 8:59), Student 3 "wasn't surprised at all" (SRI 19, 18:04). Although she had not heard of Student 4's experience before, Student 3 had preconceptions about Chinese people in general, and what Student 4 was saying about his students reinforced these views; hence, she accepted what she heard at face value. Conversely, a sharp disagreement was engendered in Student 3 mere seconds later when Student 9 was adding to what Student 4 had said. At the beginning of her contribution (quoted above as Speech Event 4, 9:54), Student 9 made it clear that she was talking specifically about Chinese students; nevertheless, she made the following generalisation: "I also later on found it like somewhere on internet that people in China, or like usually in East Asia, they, they, they appreciate the other authors" (Speech Event 4, 10:20). As

these words left Student 9's lips, Students 4 and 8 were smiling and nodding, but Student 3 was not. It was the mention of East Asia that severed continuity in Student 3's perception of the views expressed on plagiarism. Up to this point, Student 3 had been in agreement with what was being said; however, she took issue with Student 9's remark as she was also from East Asia. Thus did Student 3 describe her reading of the situation:

> [Student 9] also explained that the Chinese students really want to show their respect to the author, so they just want to keep what they say and change; they just want to copy and paste exactly what the authors say to show the respect, but no, it's not the case in [Student 3's homeland]. She also mentioned East Asia; as [Student 3's homeland] is one of the country in East Asia, it's not the case in my country. (SRI 19, 21:42)

To be clear, Student 9's contribution was not about East Asia at large; she mentioned East Asia in passing, but she was talking about students from China principally. Nonetheless, it was the East Asia aspect that Student 3 found salient because she was able to relate it to her personal experience. The fact that the rest of what Student 9 was saying paled into insignificance from Student 3's perspective when East Asia was mentioned illustrates how a single word may change the hearer's interpretation of an utterance irrespective of the speaker's intention. If a more general conclusion were to be drawn from Student 3's unique interpretation of Student 9's utterance, it would perhaps be that relevance is relative.

4.2.4.2.4   Student 4's Perspective

With 12 comments offered voluntarily by Student 4 and four elicited by the researcher, the emic data obtained through SRI 21 were rich and shed light on several aspects of Speech Event 4 from Student 4's perspective. In particular, the interview yielded insights into what had given Student 4 the impetus to moderate the discussion, what thoughts had occurred to him during the segment of the conversation in which Chinese students and academic misconduct were discussed, and how he had felt during an instance of covert disagreement. Although Student 4 did not say why he had taken it upon himself to control the discussion, he revealed that his involvement in the moderation of Speech Event 4 had been both planned and emergent. On the one hand, he had devised a remarkably specific plan for the speaking task:

> I think I kind of accepted it and maybe even planned… like in the case of this particular session, I remember that we had three things to talk about. We had the audience, plagiarism, and APA. And we had 20 minutes, so I thought, OK let's talk about the

audience for like 5 minutes, and then 5 minutes for plagiarism, and 5 minutes for APA, and then 5 minutes just extra in case we need it or in case we want to talk about something else. (SRI 21, 8:24)

Aside from confirming the intentionality of his discussion moderation, Student 4 also disclosed his time consciousness: Not only did he allocate a set amount of time for each of the topics that had to be discussed, but he also monitored the passage of time as they were speaking by glancing at the clock occasionally. This explains why Student 4 suggested moving on to the next discussion topic more than once during Speech Event 4. He explained that he had taken charge of the conversation out of a desire for the efficient use of time and because he personally did not wish to spend too much time discussing a single question. On the other hand, there were times when Student 4 described his discussion moderation as more emergent than planned. For instance, Students 6 and 9 started to talk simultaneously at the beginning of the conversation (in response to Student 4's question), but Student 6 gave way to his groupmate after a brief overlap. Once Student 9 had finished her turn, Student 4 "went back to [Student 6] because I had heard him previously start to say something" (SRI 21, 2:20). Student 4's intervention allowed Student 6 to say what he had wanted to. Another instance of facilitation occurred spontaneously when Student 4 asked his groupmates whether they had any further questions about the use of APA Style referencing; this followed 8 seconds of silence, to which Student 4 apparently endeavoured to put an end: He explained that there was "pause once again, and I wanted to break the pause by facilitating something" (SRI 21, 33:14), so he asked the question. This question about APA, then, was different from an earlier one that Student 4 had planned to ask (i.e., in order to keep the discussion on schedule) in that the need for asking this question emerged from the context of the discussion organically, whereas the previous APA question was asked because Student 4 wanted to move on to a new question after 5 minutes of discussing a given topic. What Student 4's different reasons for asking similar questions show is that some aspects of his discussion moderation were planned, but some of it arose naturally as a result of the contextual conditions of Speech Event 4.

A conspicuous part of the discussion marked by the expression of potentially controversial views was the segment in which Student 4 introduced the theme of cultural differences and suggested that Chinese students, based on his personal experience as a tutor of academic writing, were prone to commit plagiarism (quoted above as Speech Event 4, 8:59). It

emerged that Student 4 had been fully aware of the sensitive nature of what he was saying, and he almost decided against sharing his experience due to the possibility of causing offence:

> With this comment I made about the Chinese students, I was considering not making it because I was thinking it might be, I don't know, maybe slightly offensive or something to [Student 3] and [Student 8] because they're not Chinese, but they're also, you know, from East Asia, so maybe they would take it as something directed at them. But at the same time, I thought, "why not? It's my experience. Let's go ahead and share it and see what happens". I think that [Student 9] also kind of tried to soften the blow, I think. (SRI 21, 17:13)

Although the other participants would not have known it at the time, Student 4 was torn between his wish to avoid making face-threatening acts and his desire to tell the truth, but the need to share his experience (thereby engaging in the discussion on a personal level) ultimately outweighed the risk of offending some of his groupmates. It is noteworthy that Student 4 was afraid of causing offence even though the act of threatening his interlocutors' positive face (in the form of criticism) could only have been performed by extension: There were no Chinese students in the breakout room, so no one should have believed that Student 4 was directing his remarks at them unless they generalised what he was saying and understood it as applicable to all East Asian students. Student 4 was also aware of this, which is perhaps why he emphasised that he was talking specifically about Chinese students (i.e., not East Asian students in general). In retrospect, Student 4's wariness in making the utterance may be linked with the hesitation and hedging that the researcher identified in his speech; it is likely that Student 4's speech would have been characterised by fewer markers of uncertainty if he had not been concerned about how his peers would perceive his remark.

Student 4's reference to Student 9's attempt to "soften the blow" indicates that Student 4's perception of what his groupmate said (quoted above as Speech Event 4, 9:54 & 10:20) was that it had a mitigatory effect on his utterance from the points of view of Students 3 and 8. In Student 4's views, Student 9's story about her flatmate who plagiarised out of appreciation for authors made his comment about Chinese students less offensive. As it was shown above, Student 3's opinion on Student 9's contribution was different, but Student 4 did not know about it. From the perspective of Student 4, Student 9's anecdote diminished the face threat that his

remark posed. Nevertheless, Student 4 was not completely satisfied with Student 9's story as he failed to see the relevance of it:

> [Student 9] was saying this, but then I was thinking, "yeah, but if you mention other authors, you include a citation or something". So, I think she wasn't… like what she was talking about, this respect for the other authors and giving their words, that's fine if you cite it. The problem here, we're talking about plagiarism, so not citing something. I thought it was a bit off-topic. (SRI 21, 19:47)

This can be seen as another piece of evidence in support of the conclusion reached above that relevance is relative. From Student 4's perspective, what Student 9 said about Chinese and East Asian students' respect for other authors was not a relevant contribution to a discussion that centred on the avoidance of plagiarism. From Student 9's perspective, it was obviously relevant; otherwise, she would not have said it as the basic assumption that speakers make about their interlocutors is that what they say is somehow relevant to the talk exchange (Grice, 1975). A different interpretation of the topic of the discussion seems to have been the cause of the disparity in the students' perceptions of what was relevant in this context. Student 9 shared her plagiarism-related story in response to Student 4's comment about who tended to plagiarise and added what she had heard about student writers who use the work of scholars whom they hold in high esteem as their own. All of this might have appeared relevant to Student 9 on the grounds that they were discussing plagiarism, and what she said was about plagiarism. By contrast, Student 4 had a narrower conception of what they were talking about, focusing only on the causes of plagiarism and the ways in which it can be avoided; therefore, he expected his interlocutors to raise issues pertaining to citation. The judgement of neither student about relevance appears to have been wrong despite their being opposed: What was "off-topic" from Student 4's perspective was relevant in the eyes of his interlocutor. The context experienced differently by the participants of this conversation gave rise to unique sets of outlooks on what was relevant; therefore, relevance cannot be determined without the examination of speakers' individual perceptions of it.

Student 4 also pointed out that he had not agreed with what Student 8 said whilst describing the target audience for her seminar paper. Due to technical issues at Student 8's end, her utterance cannot be heard in its entirety on the recording, but the section in question includes Student 8's statement that teachers would comprise her target audience, and the following

sentence can also be heard: "They might be familiar with some of the academic terms" (Speech Event 4, 4:06). Student 8 said this in the context of describing her target audience and explaining what would need to be defined and clarified for her readers. In other words, she did not believe that "academic terms" needed to be defined because she assumed that teachers would know them, though it was not made clear what she meant by "academic terms". It was this assertion with which Student 4 silently disagreed. In his words, "here, I think I disagreed with [Student 8]. She said that teachers will be familiar with technical terms, and I thought that maybe they wouldn't be" (SRI 21, 6:22). However, Student 4 did not call Student 8's statement into question; instead, he expressed disagreement in an indirect way—essentially by outlining a contrary stance on the issue:

> And I think that also for, for teachers maybe, erm, I would maybe still give the same advice about the technical terms. So, teachers might not be familiar with specific, uh, technical terms in research. They might not be familiar with, erm, I don't know, some of these research terms, so it's, once again, I think it's important to, to define these, explain them in a kind of easily understandable way. And this can, I think, be useful. (Speech Event 4, 4:38)

This instance of disagreement escaped the researcher's attention during the initial analysis of Speech Event 4, but Student 4's admission that he had disagreed with Student 8 recontextualised the utterance and made some of its features more readily noticeable to the analyst. What seems to signal Student 4's disagreement, in addition to what he said, is how he said it. Student 4's speech was characterised by hedging: Within a turn of just 78 words, he used the clause or filler "I think" three times, the adverb "maybe" twice, and the modal verb "might" also twice, which—when combined—amounts to the toning down of his message. If Student 4 had not said what he did during the SRI, it would have been all too easy to assume that the hedging in his speech was present for no other reason than the fact that this was his customary style of speaking. However, in the light of the information about his disagreement with Student 8, Student 4 appears to have hedged in order to "soften the blow" as he said and avoid confrontation with his groupmate. Student 4's strategy seems to have worked as the only reaction Student 8 produced was a nod in apparent acceptance of what he had said.

4.2.4.2.5   Student 8's Perspective

Student 8 commented on fewer moments of Speech Event 4 than some of her peers did, and the majority of the emic data (70%) were elicited by the researcher; nevertheless, what she said cast further light on some of the focal moments of the discussion analysed thus far. For example, Student 8 provided valuable insight into her perspective on the segment of Speech Event 4 during which she and Student 4 had discussed teachers' understanding of technical terms. Compared to how Student 4 saw the exchange, it looked very different from Student 8's point of view: For her, it was a moment of realisation rather than disagreement. Earlier on, Student 8 had talked about teachers' possible familiarity with "academic terms" (quoted above as Speech Event 4, 4:06), and it was this usage that Student 8 felt she needed to reconsider upon hearing what Student 4 had to say:

> I wanted to say "technical terms", but at the time I just couldn't remember that word. …
> Later, [Student 4] mentioned, "oh, yes, teachers understand technical terms" when he was
> talking about his research or something. Then I realised, "oh yeah, that's what I wanted to
> say", but I didn't mention that. (SRI 22, 28:34)

What is remarkable about Student 8's perception of Student 4's utterance is that she seems to have focused so much on her own usage as to labour under the misapprehension that her groupmate was suggesting something that he was not. Student 4 never said that he believed teachers would understand technical terms without being provided with appropriate definitions; in fact, he explicitly stated the opposite—albeit with some hedging in his speech. Nonetheless, Student 8 was oblivious to what Student 4 was trying to tell her because Student 4's turn made her realise that she had made a mistake, and the erroneous choice of words loomed large in her mind from that moment on. Not even during the SRI did Student 8 notice that Student 4 had, in truth, been saying something different. It seems, then, that Student 8's focus in this part of the conversation was determined by her realisation of having made a mistake in word choice, and nothing that was said to her subsequently would shift her attention away from the slip. Student 8's preoccupation with her mistake is illustrative of how a single word can hold sway over participants' perceptions of a longer passage of talk.

Student 8 also provided insight into her point of view in response to a question about the segments of the discussion at which Student 4 had mentioned his observation that Chinese students tended to plagiarise more often than students from other countries (quoted above as

Speech Event 4, 8:59). The reason why Student 8 was asked about this part of the discussion was that she had, along with some of her peers, been smiling whilst listening to Student 4. Therefore, the question that was put to her was whether she had found what Student 4 was saying amusing. Interestingly, Student 8 seems to have been unaware of what was essentially the core part of Student 4's message (i.e., the comment about Chinese students):

> I think it was fun, like he was sharing his experience, you know, because I have never, not never; I mostly teach, how can I say, monolingual speakers, only from [Student 8's homeland]. But for him, it is different. He is teaching the diversity of people from different parts of the world, so it is good to hear from his experience. And he is talking about how, you know, like students are copying and plagiarising without knowing that it is really important and serious thing, you know, so that's why we are laughing. (SRI 22, 36:04)

Students 8's interpretation of what she heard appears to have been done through the filter of her personal experience. Once again, relevance was relative in this exchange given that what Student 8 found relevant in Student 4's utterance was only a marginal aspect of it. Although Student 4 did speak about international students, he did not appear to say what he said with the intention of telling his groupmates about interesting facets of intercultural encounters in the classroom—and yet, that is what Student 8 believed to be the essence of Student 4's utterance. It is noteworthy that Student 8 started discussing her own teaching experience immediately after outlining, in broad terms, what Student 4 had said. The syntax of her response to the SRI question may also be indicative of the importance she attached to her personal experience in the interpretation of her peer's utterance: Before saying what she found interesting in Student 4's contribution, Student 8 added a subordinate clause about her own context beginning with "because", that is, the fact that she had less experience in teaching international students than Student 4 was the reason why she found it "fun" and interesting. It seems that the overall effect of Student 8's focus on her own experience was that she did not understand Student 4's utterance as a reference to Chinese students' propensity for plagiarism.

Furthermore, Student 8 revealed that, at least on one occasion, her background knowledge of her interlocutors had affected the way in which she engaged in communication with them. She asked for software recommendations; it happened after the topic of plagiarism had been introduced by Student 4. Student 8 asked, "does anyone know, you know, good

plagiarism software, you know, that is free and, you know, that is good enough?" (Speech Event 4, 11:21). The question was first answered by Student 4 (and later by Student 9), though it could have been answered by anyone due to the generic subject (i.e., anyone). Nevertheless, it was the researcher's impression that Student 8 addressed Student 4 specifically because the question was preceded by an unsuccessful attempt at asking it; at the time, Student 8 did not finish her sentence as Student 9 also started to speak at the same time, but she did begin to ask, "so, do you know any good…" (Speech Event 4, 9:49) before giving way to her groupmate. The "you" in her unfinished question appeared to refer to Student 4, which Student 8 confirmed in the SRI: "I addressed [Student 4] because he… I know that he is teaching the academic writing course, and he also share his experience, you know, like how plagiarism can be avoided, so that's why I asked [Student 4] first" (SRI 22, 39:29). Although Student 8 seems to have relied on her background knowledge when deciding whom to ask the question, she also drew on information from the context of the conversation; thus, the decision behind her asking the question was influenced by a combination of her background knowledge (i.e., information she had known about Student 4's work) and what emerged from the discussion (i.e., what Student 4 shared about his work).

4.2.4.2.6   Student 9's Perspective

When remembering her perspective on Speech Event 4, Student 9 made comments at as many as 15 points of the stimulus, though most of them were brief, and the synthesis of some of her recollections posed a challenge to the researcher. This was because the memories Student 9 shared were personal to the extent that they did not always seem readily relatable to the conversation. However, this is not to say that they were not related to Speech Event 4. After all, Student 9 reported having had these thoughts as she was participating in the discussion, so there had to have been a connection even if it was more obvious to Student 9 than to the analyst. For example, Student 9 said that she had been reminded of an internet meme whilst listening to Student 4's description of an issue pertaining to academic referencing. Considering that the lesson during which the discussion and the data collection took place was also happening online, internet-based associations were not entirely out of place in this online context of communication. Nevertheless, Student 9's diverse set of ideas and feelings that were evoked in the course of the conversation can, yet again, be seen as testament to the relative nature of relevance.

Student 4's introduction of the topic of plagiarism was one of the moments of Speech Event 4 in relation to which Student 9 had memories to share. She also spoke at this stage of the discussion despite initially feeling underwhelmed when the topic was introduced. It was due to Student 9's previous academic experience, which included numerous discussions on the perils of academic misconduct over the years, that she was less than keen to have another conversation about plagiarism. As she explained, "here, I was not really into listening to anything because, especially when they started, like, talking about plagiarism, because it's like something that I've heard of so many times … I just didn't want to hear anything anymore" (SRI 18, 11:07). This piece of information adds an extra dimension to the stimulus data as Student 9 did not show outward signs of her reluctance at the time of the discussion. Lack of enthusiasm notwithstanding, she actually contributed to the conversation by sharing the story about her former flatmate who had been beset by woes arising from plagiarism (quoted above as Speech Event 4, 9:54). On the face of it, Student 9's anecdote was no more than something broadly relevant she was able to share on the topic of plagiarism, but the experience turned out to represent the schema on which Student 9 drew to interpret her groupmate's experience with his Chinese students. Asked whether she had linked what Student 4 was saying with her personal experience, Student 9 responded, "yes, definitely, yeah. I could relate to that I guess from this experience, so I would understand it when he started talking about his Chinese students" (SRI 18, 16:38). In this instance, then, Student 9's schema of Chinese students appears to have been heavily influenced by her personal experience, which she used in her interpretation of what she was being told by her groupmate. Although Student 4 was speaking about entirely different Chinese students, his utterance was understandable to Student 9 in relation to the personal background knowledge she had acquired. As a consequence, she arrived at her unique interpretation of what Student 4 was saying. It follows that every other participant who was listening to Student 4 necessarily had to have a somewhat different understanding of what he was saying due to differences in their personal schemata of Chinese students and plagiarism. (And they did—as shown above.)

There were at least two other points during Speech Event 4 when Student 9 derived meaning from her peers' utterances with reference to her schemata. After discussing issues related to plagiarism, the students turned their attention towards the intricacies of APA Style referencing, and Student 4 asked his groupmates whether they wanted to talk about specific

questions or problems regarding the use of APA. Having had to use the same system for source documentation in a previous dissertation of hers, Student 9 was reminded of the evaluation of her dissertation and her dissatisfaction with it: She bewailed the loss of a point due to referencing errors, which meant she had not been awarded full marks for the dissertation. It was this unpleasant memory that took hold of Student 9's mind as she was listening to Student 4's suggestion that they should discuss APA. Reflecting on how this part of Speech Event 4 made her feel, Student 9 said, "I could connect to that directly, like; it's like a dark point in my life now, APA thing" (SRI 18, 23:26), and it seems that the direct connection to an experience that had caused discontentment resulted in limited engagement on Student 9's part at this stage of the discussion.

Similarly, Student 4's words reminded Student 9 of her own modus operandi when he was responding to Student 8's question about note-taking. Student 4 told the group how he tended to take notes, and Student 9's reaction was the following: "When he said this, I think I was remembering my own method of doing things. And it definitely it's not like the same way he does it … It reminded me of my own style, like how I work" (SRI 18, 30:13). Student 9 appears to have interpreted Student 4's utterance by relating it to her own context, and this apparently made her focus more on her own thoughts than on what Student 4 was saying. Nevertheless, her recollection of her own method of note-taking seems to have shown Student 9 which aspects of her schematic knowledge of the world were relevant in this context: What she knew about her own note-taking allowed Student 9 to understand what Student 4 meant by talking about his (i.e., meaning was not inherent in Student 4's words, but the potential for it was there for someone in possession of the relevant background knowledge to unlock).

4.2.4.3 Summary

Although the participants' perspectives seemed ultimately to converge along similar lines, there was difference in the ratio of comments offered voluntarily by the students to the ones elicited by the researcher in each stimulated-recall interview. The overlap between the comments made voluntarily during the SRIs was not substantial, with the participants choosing to speak at points where their recollections of their emic perspectives prompted them to do so. Therefore, the researcher's interference through elicitation was necessary to ensure that data were obtained on the major analytical foci. A summary of the times at which the participants voluntarily commented on the stimulus is presented in Table 14 below.

Table 14

Points at Which SRI Participants Commented on the Stimulus

Participant	Comments made at								
Student 3	3:07	5:17	9:16	10:34	14:58	18:21			
Student 4	1:07	4:19	5:27	5:47	9:42	10:41	11:33	12:30	13:05
	14:14	16:19	17:54						
Student 8	4:20	11:40	18:26						
Student 9	1:32	3:55	5:37	7:53	11:30	12:04	13:13	14:02	14:13
	15:54	17:02							

One of the salient aspects of Speech Event 4 was Student 4's overall role in the discussion. There was agreement between the researcher and the participants in the view that Student 4 had taken on the responsibility of a moderator. Student 4 himself verified this perception by acknowledging the intentionality of his discussion moderation and revealing that he had had specific ideas on how the conversation should progress. The other focal point of analysis was the comment Student 4 made about his Chinese students, which drew a response from Student 9 at the time, but no other student's reaction was discernible from the recording. The SRIs yielded rich data on the participants' perspectives, and it emerged that Student 4 had been wary of voicing his opinion for fear of causing offence. Interpreting what Student 4 said in view of her own experience, Student 3 agreed with him; what is more, she was not surprised to hear of Chinese students' tendency to plagiarise. Student 8 was listening to Student 4 with genuine interest because she valued her groupmate's experience of teaching international students, but she did not seem to attach importance specifically to the point about Chinese students. On hearing Student 4's opinion, Student 9 was reminded of a story that she proceeded to share. Although Student 4 did not offend any of his peers with his comment, Student 9 did: Student 3 found some of what Student 9 said objectionable as she interpreted her fellow student's negative comments as possibly applicable to herself.

Relevance was brought to the fore at many stages of Speech Event 4, and the analysis showed that it was relative. Student 3's interpretation of Student 9's story about her former flatmate did not seem to align with the message conveyed by Student 9, but relevance for Student 3 lay elsewhere because of her background. Likewise, the story that Student 9 shared was found irrelevant by Student 4 despite its inclusion of a clear connection to the topic that was being discussed. Student 8's unique interpretation of the same remark (i.e., Student 4's Chinese-student comment) also illustrated how one aspect of an utterance can be singled out as relevant

by a hearer, resulting in a partial focus on the speaker's message. In all of the situations where a difference arose in what the participants deemed relevant, their schemata and background knowledge appeared to underlie the discrepancies between them. Despite major differences in interpretation, the students' judgements about relevance were internally consistent with their own schemata, which seems to suggest that relevance is a relative construct that cannot be externally established.

4.2.5 *Speech Event 5*

4.2.5.1 Description of the Speech Event

The conversation labelled as Speech Event 5 took place on 13 May as part of the last lesson of the semester. The goal of Speech Event 5 was for the participants to discuss their views on teacher education and specifically on what modules ought to be on the curriculum for prospective language teachers. The discussion was carried out in the first of two breakout rooms in which group discussions were held. The length of the recording, which corresponds to the length of Speech Event 5, is 11 minutes and 49 seconds. Everything that happened during Speech Event 5 appears to have been captured on video, though the session ended abruptly: A student was speaking when the teacher closed the breakout room. In total, five students participated in Speech Event 5, and some background information on the participants is summarised in Table 15 below.

Table 15

Background Information About the Participants in Speech Event 5

	Student 1	Student 6	Student 8	Student 9	Student 10
Age	39	43	32	24	24
Gender	Male	Male	Female	Female	Female
First language	Spanish	Kurdish	Burmese	Arabic	Hungarian

In addition to the students, the researcher was also present as an observer in the breakout room for the duration of the discussion. With the exception of one brief expression of thanks at the beginning of the recording, the researcher did not participate in Speech Event 5. The teacher was not present at any point during the discussion. The participants joined the breakout room with their microphones and cameras on, except for Student 6, who was able to participate with audio only. The conversation was carried out without interruptions or apparent technical problems, and the quality of the audio and video data that were recorded was good.

4.2.5.2 Analysis of the Speech Event

4.2.5.2.1   The Researcher's Perspective

As with all discussions, there was difference in the number and the quality of the students' contributions to Speech Event 5, though conclusions about speaker roles and other features of the conversation cannot be based on a simple count of the participants' turns as it would be analytically counterproductive. Nevertheless, an examination of how much each participant contributed to the talk exchange can reveal some aspects of the general dynamics of the discussion. What can be established with certainty is that Student 1 was the least active participant of Speech Event 5: He did not speak at all. Despite his lack of contributions, Student 1 was visible as he had his camera turned on throughout the discussion, and he appeared to be looking at his computer screen (i.e., at the other participants) and listening to his peers via earphones. On a few occasions, he was seen sipping what seemed like a hot beverage from a mug, but no further information beyond the visual was provided by him during the conversation. It may be relevant to note that Student 1 was joining Speech Event 5 from the Americas; therefore, the midmorning lesson in Central Europe was taking place in the small hours of the morning in Student 1's time zone—an important difference in perspectives that could explain Student 1's withdrawal. In ascending order of activity, Student 1 was followed by Student 6, who made an extended contribution that lasted for 96 seconds. Student 6 spoke at least twice, though his 96-second monologue straddled an interruption, potentially making it two turns rather than one. The number of Student 10's turns was four; she also engaged in backchannelling seven times whilst Student 8 was speaking, but these interjections were not counted as conversational turns. Student 9 spoke eight times, which included answers given to questions asked by her interlocutors as well as information that she shared seemingly of her own accord. The most active participant was Student 8, who contributed to the conversation on no fewer than 12 occasions; she was asking questions as well as sharing her own experience in response to the speaking task the students were performing.

Although the enumeration of the students' turns shows that Student 8 spoke more frequently than any of her groupmates did, it cannot be said that one participant dominated the discussion. It is, in fact, Student 10 whose role in Speech Event 5 seems to have resembled that of a moderator to some extent. The higher number of turns produced by Students 8 and 9 was the result of their having a conversation with one another, whereas Student 10 tended to speak when

there was a gap in the discussion. This was evident at two points in particular. When a segment of the discussion involving Students 8 and 10 had reached its conclusion (i.e., Student 8 stopped speaking, and silence ensued), Student 10 made a summative comment combined with a question apparently intended to facilitate further discussion:

> Student 10: Yeah. OK, so, I guess we can agree just in general that testing is or can be important. What else you would suggest to be included in the… in the curriculum?
>
> Student 8: Yeah, for me, like, you know, like, strategy training, you know. (Speech Event 5, 8:12)

It was once again Student 8 who was compelled by Student 10's utterance to speak, so Student 10 had to issue another call for comments, this time specifying that she wanted participants other than Student 8 to share their views: "Others, what do you think? What else you would include maybe or any comments on these?" (Speech Event 5, 9:22).

It is noteworthy that both utterances Student 10 made included questions whose word order was declarative. In the second utterance, the idiosyncratic usage was preceded by a question in which she used standard interrogative word order. In both cases, Student 10 asked the questions with declarative syntax after starting her sentences with "what else". In the absence of further usage examples of similar questions in the data, it is difficult to say whether the expression of interrogative function through a declarative structure was brought on by Student 10's use of the sentence-initial phrase "what else" or by other contextual factors. At no other point in the conversation was there any indication that Student 10's idiolect was nonstandard in other ways; she also made a lengthy contribution of 110 seconds, during which she used Standard English—albeit without asking questions. Thus, the instances of nonstandard usage are likely to have been slips, but they cannot be conclusively accounted for as the data do not include any more examples of this type of usage (i.e., questions beginning with "what else") by Student 10. What can, however, be inferred from the available interactional data is that Student 10's usage caused no hindrance to communication whatsoever in this ELF context: Both utterances were understood as questions and answered (the first one by Student 8 and the second one by Student 9). Student 10's interlocutors presumably relied on contextual clues to interpret the illocutionary force behind the sentences. The swiftness of the responses given to Student 10's questions suggests that Students 8 and 9 were able to understand the communicative intent

behind the utterances almost instantaneously as they answered the questions as quickly as they could have been expected to do if Student 10 had used interrogative word order.

Another feature of ELF communication that attracted the analyst's attention in Speech Event 5 was explicitness. The explicitness of the participants' communication manifested itself in various ways during Speech Event 5. The first example of it occurred at the very beginning of the discussion when the participants greeted each other. The exchange of greetings was initiated by Student 8, who said "hello" (Speech Event 5, 0:20), and her gesture of courtesy was reciprocated shortly thereafter by Students 6 and 9, who added their own salutations. Ordinarily, greetings would not be a remarkable feature of the beginning of any discussion; however, the function of these greetings appeared to be different from that of conventional greetings in that the students could not have genuinely greeted each other because they had been participating in a lesson together for some time at the start of the breakout room session. Therefore, their greetings marked the beginning of Speech Event 5, but the words used to this effect did not necessarily mean that the students were meeting one another. In fact, they were decidedly not meeting in the face-to-face sense; the circumstances of the discussion (i.e., the fact that the interactants were not in the same physical space) are not to be overlooked. It is not unreasonable to assume that the online format of the lesson was among the factors that gave rise to these salutations. Even though the participants had interacted with the teacher and with one another in a larger group earlier that day, they started anew when they entered the breakout room. Speech Event 5 was a different context from the main discussion room in which the lesson was taking place, and the students may have felt that this needed to be explicitly indicated. If the participants had remained in their old context (i.e., the online lesson from which they were sent into the breakout rooms), they may have decided against exchanging greetings in the same manner as there would have been no need either to greet each other or to indicate change. The greetings may, thus, be seen as explicit acknowledgement of the new context in which the participants found themselves as well as the first cooperative effort made towards their shared goal of carrying out the discussion.

Explicitness was also evidently on display when Student 6 made his contribution to the discussion. Before giving utterance to his stance on the inclusion of language assessment in teacher education programmes, Student 6 asked the following question: "Can I, can I have my view about this?" (Speech Event 5, 1:07). The question asked by Student 6 can be interpreted as an explicit request for permission to speak. The other students in the discussion must have

arrived at a similar interpretation of Student 6's utterance as they granted him permission. The response came from two participants simultaneously: Student 10 said "sure", and Student 8 said "yeah, yeah, yeah, [Student 6], yes" (Speech Event 5, 1:10). Having been given the green light, Student 6 went on to outline the importance of familiarity with the principles of language assessment for language teachers; this was his 96-second contribution mentioned above. In pragmatic terms, what is striking about Student 6's question is that he asked it in the first place. None of the other participants sought permission to speak; in fact, Student 6 was the only person to ask a question beginning with "can I" during the entire discussion. What is more, Student 6 spoke at the beginning of Speech Event 5, and he was the one who started answering the discussion question; prior to his turn, the rest of the students (Students 8 and 10 in particular) had established what it was that needed to be discussed, but no one had made an attempt at answering the question. Student 6's turn, therefore, did not interrupt anyone else's, which makes his request seem even more conspicuous. Interestingly, Student 6 also signalled the end of his turn overtly by saying, "yes, thank you" (Speech Event 5, 2:48), thereby leaving his interlocutors in no doubt as to whether he had finished speaking. Aside from the fact that Student 6 explicitly indicated the beginning of his turn, the manner in which he did so was also interesting because he did not appear to say exactly what he meant; nevertheless, he was not misunderstood. Student 6 was asking whether he could "have" his view on the topic of the discussion, but the semantic meaning of his question did not seem to align with his intended pragmatic meaning (i.e., sharing his opinion with his peers). Student 6's utterance was not misconstrued because his interlocutors were able to derive meaning from the context and thus to understand that he was not asking for permission to formulate an opinion and keep it to himself (i.e., have a view); instead, he was asking whether his groupmates would allow him to speak and express an opinion.

Explicitness also played a part in an instance when meaning had to be negotiated as a result of Student 8's failure to understand what Student 9 had said. The situation that necessitated the negotiation of meaning arose after Student 9 had shared her experience of attending a module on teacher training and pointed out why she believed it offered useful skills. In response, Student 8 asked a question, and the following dialogue resulted:

Student 8: [Student 9], do you remember the name of the course? You know, like the title or [inaudible].

Student 9: Training of Trainers [overlapping with Student 8 and difficult to hear].

Student 8: Pardon?

Student 9: Name of the course is Training of Trainers.

Student 8: Uh, I mean the name of the course, you know, like, because in our country, like there are different types of, you know, subjects or maybe the courses, you know, teachers have to take. So, is there any like particular name of the, you know, like…

Student 9: I'm not sure if I get you. Like the course that I'm taking now? Or…

Student 8: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Student 9: It's called the Training of Trainers. Yes.

Student 8: Ah. Oh, OK. The Training of Trainers. Yeah, yeah, yes, yeah.

Student 9: Yeah. They probably have it like in the next semester, so you can sign up for it. (Speech Event 5, 10:22)

The communication problem may partly have been caused by technical issues as the answer given by Student 9 to Student 8's question was not only overlapping with the question, but it was also difficult to hear due to the fact that the line appeared to be breaking up when Student 9 started to speak. Student 8 signalled her nonunderstanding by saying "pardon" with rising intonation, which Student 9 seems to have interpreted as a request for repetition. Student 9 obliged, and she also made her second utterance more specific than the first one: She added "name of the course" before the piece of information that she wanted to convey so as presumably to disambiguate her utterance and make its relevance to Student 8's question clear. Although Student 9 omitted the obligatory definite article from before the first noun phrase in her response, this diversion from Standard English grammar did not impede the communicative effectiveness of her utterance (i.e., her message was intact). Nevertheless, what Student 9 said proved less than sufficient for Student 8 to understand what her groupmate meant. Student 8, who must have felt that her interlocutor was not answering her question, made an effort at resolving the communication problem by clarifying what she had intended to find out with her original question. Interestingly, the answer to Student 8's question (i.e., the name of the course) had been provided at this point, but for some reason she failed to recognise it as a valid response. It is also worth mentioning that Student 8 made reference to her own context (i.e., "in our country") in her bid to make her communicative intent clear even though there was no apparent connection between the name of the module that she was trying to find out and the system of teacher

education in her homeland; from Student 8's perspective, however, the new information she was seeking is likely to have been interpretable through the background knowledge she already possessed.

When it dawned on Student 9 that she was not being understood, she explicitly indicated that there was a communication problem by suggesting that she may not have understood the question (i.e., "I'm not sure if I get you"); at the same time, she made a clarification request. Up to this point in the conversation, it did not seem as though the students had been aware of the misalignment that characterised their communication. Thus, it was arguably this turn that ultimately allowed the communication problem to be resolved: Not only did Student 9 recognise the lack of understanding, but she made a conscious effort to establish common ground. Instead of asking Student 8 to rephrase the question, Student 9 provided her peer with a ready-made interpretation of Student 8's question based on the answer Student 9 had given previously. The manner in which Student 9 phrased her clarification request was both specific and convenient: It was enough for Student 8 to accept the interpretation offered to her—and accept, she did vigorously (i.e., saying "yeah" three times). This, then, provided Student 9 with the information she needed to determine whether her previous response was relevant: It eminently was; therefore, she repeated it without much modification. For good measure, she added "yes" at the end of her utterance, reinforcing the statement. In her response, Student 8 first signalled acceptance ("OK") and then repeated the answer. At this point, the answer to Student 8's original question could scarcely have been made more explicit: Student 9 had stated it more than once, and Student 8 then echoed it in acceptance. To indicate her understanding, Student 8 also added, "yeah, yeah, yes, yeah", which could have been the end of the negotiation of meaning, but it was not. Student 9 provided a further response by saying "yeah" and encouraging her groupmate to choose the module at the next opportunity. With this said, Student 9 was satisfied that Student 8 had understood her explanation, and Student 9 was able to move on with her explanation safe in the knowledge that the communication problem was consigned to the past. Although it is not clear what—beyond the initial overlap—gave rise to the example of nonunderstanding outlined above, cooperation between the students appears to have played an important part in the resolution of it. Out of the two interlocutors involved, Student 9 seems to deserve somewhat more credit for finding a way out of difficulty as she highlighted the problem and actively sought to address it by requesting clarification of what her groupmate meant. However, Student 8 also contributed to the

solution by providing the clarification that was required and signalling that she had understood what her peer was trying to say.

4.2.5.2.2   The Participants' Perspectives

The participation of every student in a follow-up SRI was requested; nevertheless, the collection of emic data was possible from only four participants: Student 6 was not available for a stimulated-recall session, but all of his peers were. Furthermore, the minimisation of the amount of time that would elapse between Speech Event 5 and the SRIs was attempted, but these endeavours did not always bear fruit. The intervening time was successfully minimised in the case of Student 8, who did her SRI on the day of Speech Event 5, just 2 hours after the conversation. Student 10 was available for an SRI somewhat later, 5 days after the discussion. However, much more time elapsed before the remaining students were able to watch the stimulus and comment on it. In the case of Student 1, 12 days passed before he had a chance to do his SRI, and Student 9 waited as many as 16 days before watching the stimulus. As it will be shown below, the long intervals between Speech Event 5 and the SRIs, particularly in the case of Student 9, compromised the participants' powers of recollection, which can be seen as a limitation on the dependability of the data. Fortunately, delayed attempts at recollection affected the quality of recall in only two of the four SRIs. All SRI participants watched the stimulus in its entirety, and they took part in the SRIs with their cameras turned on.

4.2.5.2.3   Student 1's Perspective

Even though Student 1 had not spoken during Speech Event 5, he was willing to comment on the stimulus retrospectively. Because of his limited involvement in the conversation, he did not have much to say, but he made one comment of his own accord, and his memories were elicited at another point by the researcher. In addition, Student 1 shared a few general observations about Speech Event 5 after he had watched the stimulus (i.e., the post-SRI comments were not made on specific segments of the recording). One of the aspects of Speech Event 5 upon which Student 1 was able to shed some light was the question concerning his own reluctance to contribute to the discussion. The task set for the students was to discuss teacher education programmes and ways in which they could be improved. For Student 1, this was not uncharted territory by any means: He explained that he had worked on curriculum design for teachers as a senior teacher himself; therefore, he was familiar with the topic of the discussion and "had a lot of ideas" (SRI 29, 21:12) about it. Despite his experience, however, he failed to

see the aim of the speaking task as he felt that the instructions for the breakout room session had not been specific enough. As he said, "I didn't quite understand what we were doing there; that's why I didn't participate because they were just very random ideas" (SRI 29, 23:47). Aside from thinking that the speaking task was overly general, Student 1 also believed that they would have needed more time to discuss the topic at length.

Student 1 mentioned that he had thought of Student 10's role in the discussion in positive terms. It emerged that Student 1 had considered his groupmate's efforts to moderate the discussion (quoted above as Speech Event 5, 8:12 & 9:22) necessary because he realised that they had digressed from the original question: Instead of considering ways to improve teacher education programmes, the students were talking about issues pertaining to language assessment, which was too specific and left the broader and more relevant question unaddressed. In Student 1's opinion, it was this apparent digression that Student 10 helped bring to an end by asking the questions that she did. Apart from acknowledging the positive impact that Student 10's interventions had on the discussion, Student 1 added that Student 10's behaviour during Speech Event 5 satisfied his expectations of how the conversation would unfold: "I really liked the part that [Student 10] took—the lead—again because sometimes I tend to do that, but since [Student 10] is there, it's like I'm expecting that she's going to do that" (SRI 29, 24:10). Student 1's expectations for this particular discussion appear to have been influenced by his schema of the general classroom context. When asked what had prompted him to expect that Student 10 should take the lead, Student 1 said he had felt it was appropriate for Student 10 to do so "because she's always doing that in the class; I'm comfortable with that" (SRI 29, 24:39). By the time Speech Event 5 took place, Student 1 had, indeed, had the opportunity to accumulate schematic knowledge of what Student 10 normally did: He and Student 10 had participated in Speech Events 1 and 3 together, and they had also taken part in two additional breakout room sessions together earlier in the semester (on 25 March and on 15 April).

4.2.5.2.4   *Student 8's Perspective*

As the participant who did her SRI with the shortest delay, Student 8 was able to comment on the stimulus seemingly more effortlessly than those who waited longer before they participated in their SRIs. In total, she shared memories of six segments of Speech Event 5; of these, three were offered voluntarily and three elicited by the researcher. One of the aspects of the discussion into which insight was gained through Student 8's recollections was the

negotiation of meaning in which she had been involved with Student 9 (quoted above as Speech Event 5, 10:22). Had it not been for Student 8's clarification, it would not have been clear why she had asked repeatedly the name of a module despite having been told the name; however, she explained that she had not realised Student 9 had been talking about her recent experience:

> I thought that it was the course she studied when she was at university, not now. Because she's just mentioned, like, "oh, there is a course, like, you know, we have to design the lessons and courses", and I don't know if she is talking about a course she is taking right now. I know that she is taking the Training the Trainers course, but I thought that she was talking about something else, you know, like the course she already studied. … That's why I kept asking, "what is the name of the course?" (SRI 22, 16:28)

Based on the emic data Student 8 shared, it seems that she was trying to establish relevance in the course of her dialogue with Student 9. As Student 8 had known about the Training of Trainers course, the name of the module was not new information to her, but she failed to see how it was relevant to the description of what she believed to be a module taken by Student 9 earlier, in a different programme of study. Student 8's interpretation of what her interlocutor was saying appears to have been heavily influenced by her preconception of what she was about to hear: She expected her groupmate to tell her about past experience (i.e., her previous studies), not current experience; therefore, the name of a module that was on offer at the time of the discussion was incompatible with her expectations as it seemed out of context. Although the name of the module may have initially been considered extraneous information by Student 8, her insistence on learning the name consistently produced the same result. When she had been told the same module name three times, it was no longer possible to dismiss "Training of Trainers" as irrelevant. Because the information was irreconcilable with Student 8's frame of reference, she was forced to recontextualise what she was being told. Once Student 8 had abandoned her attempt to place the information in the context of her peer's previous studies, she became able to understand how the name of the module was relevant to the conversation they were having. With the establishment of relevance, Student 8 had understood what Student 9 was saying and stopped asking her the same question.

Student 8 also made an insightful observation about the comments with which her groupmates contributed to the conversation. She noticed that her peers were answering the

discussion questions by talking about aspects of the topic that were relevant to their own areas of expertise:

> What I realised was we are talking about something we are specialised in. So, for example, [Student 9], so she conducted a study with the teachers' perceptions and teachers', you know, like, education …, so she just shared her experience. So, for [Student 10], so she is specialised in language testing, so she mentioned about the language testing and stuff. (SRI 22, 8:04)

Student 8 did not say how this realisation made her feel (i.e., whether she viewed it positively or negatively), but the participants' penchant for talking about their specialisms had evidently been noticeable enough for her to mention it later. What is more, Student 8 did not attempt to evade self-scrutiny, either: She readily admitted that she had also been talking about what she considered her area of expertise. The essence of Student 8's observation, then, lies in the importance of the students' background knowledge and the ways in which they made their knowledge relevant in the context of Speech Event 5. The remark highlights the subjective nature of relevance as the students who talked about their specialisms are likely to have done so based on the assumption that what they had to say was relevant to the discussion; nevertheless, these contributions were conspicuous from Student 8's perspective presumably because she deemed them less relevant than the speakers did. This may be an example of how schemata can influence perceptions of relevance: Speakers are likely to relate their background knowledge to the topic of a conversation and, equally, to interpret a discussion through the filter of their schemata. In this case, students in possession of knowledge of a particular type made use of their expertise in a context where it was not necessarily needed; this is how the discussion digressed from teacher education programmes to language assessment. By making the comment about the participants' tendency to contribute to the discussion with reliance on their background knowledge, Student 8 also demonstrated her familiarity with the background of her peers; in other words, she had background knowledge of her interlocutors' background knowledge, which placed her in a position to be able to make this observation. If she had not been participating in seminar discussions with the same set of students for an extended period of time, she would not have recognised the extent to which her peers were reliant on their schemata when responding to the discussion questions.

It was also Student 8's familiarity with her groupmates' communication patterns that enabled her to pass judgement on the manner in which Student 6 marked the end of his turn. As noted above, Student 6 explicitly marked the end of his turn when he said "yes, thank you" (Speech Event 5, 2:48), and then he spoke no more. From the researcher's perspective, Student 6's "thank you" was analysed as a discourse marker that served the purpose of making the exchange more explicit by demarcating the boundaries between the participants' turns. Interestingly, Student 8's opinion on Student 6's utterance-final expression of thanks differed from that of the researcher: She believed that Student 6 said "thank you" because he was being polite. However, instead of considering her peer's words in the specific context of Speech Event 5, Student 8 appeared to base her opinion on her schema of how Student 6 tended to present his views in the more general context of group discussions: "He always say, like 'thank you' after whenever he talks. Yeah, he sounds really polite. It is not strange because I have heard him so many times, you know, in both semesters" (SRI 22, 4:44). Student 8 referenced the fact that she and Student 6 had been attending online seminars together for the second semester at this point; therefore, she was not unfamiliar with Student 6's personal style of communication. Student 8's knowledge of the general classroom context seems to have acted as a point of reference, allowing her to compare Student 6's contribution with her past experience of her groupmate's style of speaking. Therefore, Student 8 concluded that Student 6's utterance was "not strange" because it matched her expectations of how he would communicate.

Student 1's complete silence during Speech Event 5 proved noticeable not only from the researcher's perspective but also from that of Student 8: She noticed that Student 1 was not contributing to the conversation, and the realisation prompted Student 8 to sympathise with her groupmate. As she put it, "[Student 1] didn't have a chance to talk, so I was feeling bad at the time for him" (SRI 22, 18:53). Student 8 believed that her peer's silence was due to two reasons. Firstly, they did not have enough time for the discussion; similar breakout room sessions would normally last for 15–20 minutes, but this one barely passed the 10-minute mark, which Student 8 thought was an insufficient amount of time. Student 8 demonstrated awareness of her groupmates' circumstances when she described the second reason why Student 1 had not had a chance to speak: "Normally, it is still very early, you know, like in his country, so I understand, you know, like how he might still be sleepy, so I understand his situation" (SRI 22, 19:34). Student 8 appears to have been under the impression that Student 1 was unable (rather than

unwilling) to become involved in the discussion as a result of the combination of sleep deprivation and the brevity of the conversation.

4.2.5.2.5   *Student 9's Perspective*

As mentioned above, some of the participants were hindered in their attempts at recollection by the length of time that elapsed between Speech Event 5 and the SRIs. This was particularly true for Student 9, who admitted as much, saying: "I am not quite sure if I am actually able to remember anything" (SRI 30, 9:21). The difficulty she had remembering how she had felt during the discussion highlighted the importance of facial clues in the stimulus; Student 9 said that the fact her camera had not been pointed accurately at her face was partly the reason why she found it difficult to recall what her thoughts had been during the conversation. If Student 9's entire face—rather than only her chin—had been visible on the video, it might have been easier for her to remember the details of the discussion. It ought to be mentioned that Student 9 was able to see three of her groupmates (Students 1, 8, and 10) as their faces were fully visible on the recording, and yet she found the visual information of little help. It was her own facial expression that she wanted to use as a reminder of what she had been thinking. Although the researcher had no control over the placement of the participants' cameras in this study, it could be worth noting for researchers planning to undertake similar investigations that the extent to which each participant is visible in the stimulus data may have implications for the informants' ability to recall what they were thinking at the time when the data were recorded.

Despite the 16 days that separated Student 9 from Speech Event 5 at the time of the recall, she was able to comment on five segments of the discussion; two of her remarks were offered voluntarily and three elicited. With Student 9's participation as the benchmark for salience, the most significant moments of Speech Event 5 occurred when she was telling her groupmates about a module she was taking, but her point was not fully understood by Student 8, who then kept asking clarification questions; thus, Students 8 and 9 entered into negotiation of meaning (quoted above as Speech Event 5, 10:22). Student 9 explained that her motivation to share the information that prompted Student 8 to ask follow-up questions had been derived from an assessment of her interlocutors' background knowledge. Student 9 told her groupmates about one of the modules she had chosen that semester "because in this group, I'm the only one who's taking it this semester, and no one else was there, so they don't know about it yet. Next year, they will be taking it" (SRI 30, 17:56). It seems that Student 9's focus was on whether her

groupmates had been familiar with the module she was about to describe, and because she realised that they had not been, she decided to share the information about it.

Student 9 did not, however, appear to have concerned herself too much with the other aspect of the exchange, namely the negotiation of meaning with Student 8. Asked whether she had believed her message had been understood, Student 9 said, "at first, I think not. But maybe the second time when she asked again, and I tried to answer again maybe she kind of got it, but I cannot say that yes, she 100% got the information" (SRI 30, 19:21). Even though there was uncertainty regarding Student 8's comprehension of what she had been told, Student 9 did not consider it absolutely vital to ensure that she was understood because she revealed that alternative channels of communication had existed between the members of the group, and she knew that, if needed, she would be able to provide further clarification outside of the classroom context: "I was just thinking, 'OK, if she will ask me later, then I just explain it' …, but from her face, she seemed somehow like she got it anyways" (SRI 30, 19:55). Aside from illustrating the thoughts that crossed Student 9's mind during the negotiation of meaning, the quotation above highlights the significance of the nonverbal features of communication: Student 9 clearly attached importance to the facial expressions visible on Student 8's countenance as she considered those more indicative of having been understood than the words Student 8 said to signal comprehension.

4.2.5.2.6   *Student 10's Perspective*

Unlike in previous discussions, Student 10 was somewhat less engaged in Speech Event 5, and her reduced involvement in the conversation was also reflected in the amount of stimulated-recall data she was able to provide retrospectively. Nevertheless, Student 10 made six comments on various aspects of Speech Event 5; two of these were made voluntarily and four elicited. It was Student 6's 96-second oration on the need for language assessment to be incorporated into teacher education programmes that loomed large in Student 10's mind for most of the discussion. The reasons why the contribution made by Student 6 appeared important from Student 10's perspective are threefold: Firstly, Student 10 was not surprised to hear Student 6's response to the discussion question as she was familiar with her peer's background, and she had, in fact, almost expected him to say what he did. Secondly, she put what she believed to be the correct interpretation on her groupmate's utterance. Thirdly, she attempted to clarify what Student 6 had meant because she thought that the other group members had misunderstood him.

Unbeknownst to the other participants, Student 10 was aware of some of the academic work that Student 6 had done as they were working on their respective research projects under the tutelage of the same lecturer. Having the same research supervisor meant that Students 6 and 10 had, on occasion, worked together outside of seminars, and Student 10 had developed an understanding of the issues that were of interest to Student 6. Student 10 explained how their shared background had helped her predict what her fellow student would say:

> Here, when [Student 6] was speaking, I knew what he was going to say because he is also under [the same supervisor as Student 10], and he also has language assessment as his research topic. For him too, it is the school leaving examination that is there as his main focus. So, when he started to speak, I knew that he was going to talk about that. (SRI 23, 4:12)

Student 10, then, was not surprised to hear what Student 6 said for the reason that Student 6's background and researcher interests were not unknown to Student 10 owing to their shared supervisor and the fact that they had worked together in contexts other than this module. Arguably, it was in part due to her familiarity with her groupmate's research focus—in addition to her knowledge of the subject—that Student 10 reached a particular interpretation of what Student 6 had said, and she believed that her understanding—as opposed to that of her groupmates—accurately reflected what Student 6 had meant. Student 10 inferred that her peers had misunderstood Student 6 from their follow-up comments. In response to Student 6's views on why it was important for prospective teachers to learn about language assessment, Student 9 explained that teachers in her homeland faced a number of restrictions when examining the progress made by their students. Although Student 10 wanted to make her views known at this stage of the conversation, she gave way to Student 8, who started to speak at the same time. Student 8 outlined differences between formal testing and informal testing before going on to argue that teachers needed to use a combination of testing methods in their practice. Only at this point was Student 10 finally able to make her own contribution to the discussion by describing some of the benefits that she believed acquaintance with the principles of language assessment could bring to teachers. Student 10 clarified in her SRI that she had presented her own understanding of what Student 6 said in order to counter what she saw as misunderstood interpretations of Student 6's original point. The thoughts that had occurred to Student 10 just before she spoke were the following:

Here, when the girls were talking, I was thinking for a second and rolled my eyes. I was just thinking about the fact that they were talking about how teachers don't have a say in what goes into the test, which was strange to me because I think even in their contexts it's not necessarily the case that the teacher puts it together, but someone is responsible for it, so that's what I think the misunderstanding was here, that [Student 6] wasn't talking about what the teachers do at the very end of things, but during the lessons and throughout the process of teaching. I don't think that was completely clear to them. (SRI 23, 10:24)

The thoughts described above prompted Student 10 to issue a clarification even though Student 6 had not spoken directly before her (i.e., she referred back to what he had said before Student 9's and Student 8's turns). What she said to her groupmates was,

I think maybe, I don't know, maybe this is what you meant, [Student 6], that of course the final examinations are always more rigid in this sense that, you know, they have to basically show what you've learned, this and that, but if teachers should know about … assessment in general, I think they can do creative, uh, you know, formative assessment in the classroom. (Speech Event 5, 5:10)

Although a sense of understanding the true meaning of what Student 6 had said gave rise to the clarification, Student 10 appeared to convey what she believed was the correct interpretation to her peers with some uncertainty at the beginning of her turn. Not only did she preface the substance of her utterance with "I don't know", but she also said "I think" once and "maybe" twice before presenting Student 6's point in her understanding. The tentativeness was, no doubt, a tacit acknowledgement that Student 10 did not actually know for certain what Student 6 had meant; she engaged with his utterance to the best of her abilities to reach a reasonable conclusion about the meaning of Student 6's words, but she was presenting merely her own interpretation of those words. The fact that there were more overlaps in the background knowledge and subject-specific schemata between Student 6 and Student 10 than between Student 6 and the rest of the group increased the likelihood of Student 10's being correct; nevertheless, Student 10 still had no more than her personal view of what he had intended to say. The definitive verification, therefore, could have come only from Student 6. However, it failed to materialise as Student 6 did not comment on Student 10's explanation; in fact, he never spoke again after making his lengthy contribution towards the beginning of the discussion. As Student

10 noted, "at the end, I gave [Student 6] the opportunity to respond and say whether he agreed or not, but he had gone totally silent" (SRI 23, 15:32).

Apart from clarifying the crux of what Student 6 had said, Student 10 did not assume a particularly active role in Speech Event 5. She did, however, moderate the discussion on two occasions: The questions she asked to this end (quoted above as Speech Event 5, 8:12 & 9:22) have thus far been analysed linguistically (especially with regard to word order) and pragmatically—with a focus on possible intended meaning in context. It is to the latter aspect of analysis (i.e., the communicative intentions of the speaker) that the insights Student 10 provided into her emic perspective contributed. She explained why she had taken on the role of a moderator to begin with:

> I must say that here, when [Student 8] spoke again, I was listening with only half an ear. Here, I was watching the clock, and I saw that we had been talking about the same thing for 6–7 minutes, and then I took it upon myself to say that we agree that testing is important and ask what else they wanted to say. Just to take the conversation in a different direction; that was my intention. (SRI 23, 17:22)

The second question with which Student 10 attempted to entice her peers to speak began with "others" (i.e., anyone but Student 8), and it was necessary because the previous question was answered by Student 8—the same person who had been speaking before. Student 10 felt that Student 8 had at that point spoken enough, and she wanted to involve more participants in the conversation. In addition, Student 10 confessed that she had not felt like contributing to the discussion with further points of her own; therefore, it seemed logical that she should make the rest of the group speak in her stead. Nonetheless, the passage of time constituted the most pressing need for discussion moderation from Student 10's perspective. Besides the time pressure that prompted Student 10 to invite her groupmates to speak, there was another aspect of her decision to engage in discussion moderation upon which the SRI comments shed light: appropriateness. In Student 10's view, it was only fitting that she should respond once Student 8 ceased speaking given that she was the only participant who had been providing Student 8 with various types of feedback while she was speaking. Student 10 summarised her outlook on why it had been appropriate for her to ask the rest of the group if they wished to add further ideas to the discussion in the following way:

If someone says something, I'm just nodding and uh-huhing to signal that I'm listening to them, and then I have room to say something because I was actively there. And it follows from this that when someone finishes speaking, I feel that it is I who should perhaps ask whether anyone wants to say anything. (SRI 23, 22:24)

Although Student 10 used the present tense in her description of the interaction, what she said ought not to be interpreted as a general comment; it must have been intended to illustrate her thought process during the interaction with Student 8 as the quotation above was her response to the researcher's question about the reasons why she had adopted the role of a moderator. Student 10 highlighted the importance of backchannelling in the dialogue between her and Student 8: Because Student 10 was the one who had continuously supplied Student 8 with feedback in the form of nonlexical backchannelling (e.g., "uh-huh"), she felt that the two of them were in conversation with one another; therefore, it was natural for her to respond to what Student 8 had said. Student 10's perception that she was active in backchannelling is borne out by the stimulus data: As mentioned above, she backchannelled on at least seven different occasions (i.e., backchannelling was counted in single turns irrespective of the number of sounds used within a turn for this purpose) during Student 8's utterances. By contrast, no one else in the group provided any backchannelling, which Student 10 also appears to have noticed as she added that "I hear little of this verbal feedback coming from the others. I think it is important for the other party that there should be feedback" (SRI 23, 23:09). It seems, then, that Student 10's backchannelling was related to her subsequent discussion moderation in that the latter was facilitated by the former.

4.2.5.3 Summary

Due to the small number of comments made by the SRI participants voluntarily, there were few overlaps between the segments of the discussion that they deemed worthy of mention retrospectively. The only genuine overlap in the content of the SRI data occurred between the perspectives of Students 8 and 9, who mutually found their interaction, wherein they had encountered difficulty in understanding one another, remarkable. Nevertheless, further information was elicited by the researcher on parts of the conversation that were seen as analytically salient as well as on aspects of the discussion that were more incidentally relevant to the participation of specific students. A summary of the remarks that were offered by the SRI participants without elicitation is presented in Table 16 below.

Table 16

Points at Which SRI Participants Commented on the Stimulus

Participant	Comments made at		
Student 1	4:24		
Student 8	5:47	10:38	11:42
Student 9	6:20	10:23	
Student 10	8:23	11:45	

Although no single aspect of the conversation was considered important by every student, two segments of Speech Event 5 emerged as significant from—some of—the participants' perspectives. The most notable part of the discussion was the negotiation of meaning between Students 8 and 9 because not only did the interactants themselves see it as interesting and share their emic perspectives on the episode, but the researcher also found it to be deserving of analysis independently of the students. The interaction that culminated in overt negotiation of meaning looked different from the perspective of each participant. Student 8 was confused by what her groupmate had said; therefore, she felt she needed to ask questions to establish what Student 9 had meant. What appears to have caused the misunderstanding from Student 8's perspective was that her expectations of what her interlocutor would talk about were difficult to reconcile with the actual information that was imparted to her. By contrast, Student 9 seems to have attached less importance to the negation of meaning that had taken place between her and Student 8. From Student 9's point of view, the reasons for the misunderstanding were opaque as she did not know what Student 8's expectations were; moreover, she was aware of the alternative channels of communication that would allow her and Student 8 to clarify the misunderstanding after the lesson, which is why she did not necessarily feel that it was mandatory that the negotiation of meaning succeed. Nonetheless, the researcher's analysis showed that Student 9's efforts had contributed more to the resolution of the communication problem than those made by Student 8. Ultimately, however, the negotiation was a cooperative act of communication as Student 8's comprehension of Student 9's utterance was made possible through the recognition that there was a problem, which needed to be followed up by efforts made mutually to bring their different conceptions of what the other person was saying into alignment.

The other aspect of Speech Event 5 that proved salient from the participants' perspectives was Student 10's discussion moderation. Although Student 1 had not contributed to the conversation himself, he emphasised the importance of Student 10's occasional moderation of

the discussion. In Student 1's view, what Student 10 did to involve the rest of the group in the talk exchange was necessary to keep the conversation on track. What is more, Student 1's comments once again highlighted the significance of schemata as his expectations of what Student 10 would say and how she would behave in this specific discussion were based on his prior experience and background knowledge of the broader classroom context. From the perspective of the moderator (i.e., Student 10), however, the discussion moderation appeared to be motivated by an altogether different aspect of Speech Event 5: time pressure. It was because of her acute awareness of the passage of time that Student 10 felt she needed to intervene and make those speak who had not yet made their views known. In addition, Student 10's comments gave rise to the conclusion that backchannelling had played an important part in the conversation in that it helped Student 10 maintain continuity in her involvement, which directly facilitated her subsequent assumption of the role of a moderator. Similarly to Students 1 and 10, the researcher noted that the pragmatic function of Student 10's questions had amounted to discussion moderation, though no judgement was made as to whether Student 10's mediative endeavours had been useful or necessary for the discussion as a whole. However, the researcher—in contrast to the participants—scrutinised some of the linguistic features of the interaction and analysed idiosyncrasies of usage, particularly the word order in Student 10's questions.

4.2.6 *Speech Event 6*

4.2.6.1 Description of the Speech Event

The discussion that will be referred to as Speech Event 6 took place on 13 May, along with Speech Event 5, as part of the last lesson of the semester. The task for the students—just as for those in Speech Event 5—was to discuss the curricular structure of teacher education courses and suggest elements that should be included in such programmes. The discussion was held in the second of two breakout rooms, and the recording of it is 11 minutes and 44 seconds long. A few words of salutation appear to have been said before the recording was started; with the exception of these, the discussion was recorded in full. In total, five students participated in Speech Event 6, and some background information on them is summarised in Table 17 below.

Table 17

Background Information About the Participants in Speech Event 6

	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	Student 7
Age	43	32	27	29	28
Gender	Female	Female	Male	Female	Female
First language	Mongolian	Vietnamese	English	Persian	Spanish

Apart from the participants, no one else was witness to the conversation: Neither the teacher of the group nor the researcher was present in the breakout room. Every student participated in Speech Event 6 with their camera turned on, and both the video and audio signals that they transmitted were of good quality, which is to say that everything said was clearly audible and that the students were visible on the screen throughout the conversation. Speech Event 6 was not disrupted by technical issues.

4.2.6.2 Analysis of the Speech Event

4.2.6.2.1 The Researcher's Perspective

Even though all of the students contributed to Speech Event 6 by sharing their views with the rest of the group, there were noticeable differences in the distribution of the participants' turns. Student 5 was the least active member of the group: She spoke only twice, which accounts for 7.7% of the total number of turns identified ($N = 26$). Student 5 was followed—in linear ascension—by Student 2, who spoke three times (11.5%); Student 3, who spoke four times (15.4%); and Student 7, who spoke five times (19.2%). The 14 contributions made by the four students constituted little more than half of all turns in Speech Event 6—approximately 54%. By contrast, Student 4 single-handedly dominated the discussion: He spoke a total of 12 times, which amounts to about 46% of all turns. To clarify, the number of turns is to be understood as the number of times each participant made a separate utterance, but the number is not indicative of the duration of their turns. Nevertheless, it is beyond doubt that Student 4 spoke more frequently than anyone else did in Speech Event 6. Student 4's contributions to the discussion can be categorised as follows: Firstly and most frequently, his utterances included responses to comments made by his groupmates. Secondly, Student 4 shared opinions of his own without attempting to relate them overtly to what the others said. The third category of his utterances is what can be described as discussion moderation: utterances made in order either to prompt other students to speak or to indicate transitional aspects of the discussion (e.g., its conclusion). It is

Student 4's discussion moderation that appears to merit further analysis given that it was unique to his participation and done by no one else in the group.

Student 4 assumed the role of the moderator early on in the discussion when his groupmates were engaged in small talk. Students 2 and 3 were discussing the different hours of the day at which they had to join the lesson due to time zone differences (e.g., for Student 2, the lessons were in the evening) when Student 4 intervened:

Student 2: Yeah, almost good evening.

Student 3: So, usually you have to study until midnight. I think that past midnight, right?

Student 2: Yeah. And then I have to study at 11.00 pm… 11. And last semester, and I, you know, it was half past… how can I say? It is half past 12? Yeah, 12.00 pm. Yeah.

Student 4: All right, so we have the subjects to be included in teacher education. What, what should these be?

Student 3: Hm, so the, the whole programme? I mean that like the… for example, in [Student 3's homeland], the, if someone want to be a teachers. (Speech Event 6, 0:06)

The structure of the utterance seems twofold: Student 4 first stated what the task set for the discussion was and then asked a question to elicit responses from his peers. The elicitation worked as Student 3 began to answer the question. In addition to this instance of discussion moderation, there were four more times during Speech Event 6 when Student 4 took control of the discussion. The next one came after Student 4 himself had shared a suggestion for a module which he thought was important to include in teacher education programmes; he then turned to his groupmates and asked, "and then, uh, what about the rest of you guys? Do you think there's anything missing from this list?" (Speech Event 6, 3:12). The second act of discussion moderation was similar to the first one in that Student 4 invited his peers to speak without nominating anyone in particular; however, it differed from the previous one in that there was no description of the topic of the discussion included before the questions. At that point, no such reminder was necessary of course: The students had been talking about teacher education programmes for more than 3 minutes, so Student 4 must have assumed—correctly—that his groupmates would understand what he was asking them about. In the absence of nomination, it was Student 7 who volunteered herself for answering Student 4's questions; she explained what

she believed were the most important components of teacher education programmes. Student 7's utterance and the dialogue it engendered will be analysed in more detail below.

In terms of discussion moderation, Student 4 made two more attempts to involve his groupmates in the conversation. The feature which his next two efforts to this end had in common was that Student 4 nominated his groupmates. The next example of Student 4's discussion moderation occurred after Student 5 had spoken: He expressed agreement with Student 5 before saying, "[Student 3], your, your hand is up" (Speech Event 6, 6:38). At this point, Student 3's hands were not visible on the screen, which suggests that it is likely to have been her virtual hand (i.e., the activation of the hand-raising function of Microsoft Teams, which allows participants in a meeting to signal that they wish to speak) to which Student 4 was referring. In this case, then, Student 3's turn was arguably initiated by herself: Even though Student 4 nominated her, he did so as a result of having noticed her signal. Nevertheless, it was through the agency of Student 4—and not anyone else—that Student 3's nomination happened. Shortly after Student 3 had finished her turn, in which she argued for the inclusion of research methodology modules in teacher education curricula, Student 4 asked, "[Student 2], what do you think?" (Speech Event 6, 7:04). When Student 2 finished speaking, there was no need for Student 4 to invite anyone to speak because Student 7 seamlessly followed Student 2's turn with a contribution of her own.

It may be worth noting that there were similarities between the two types of utterances that Student 4 used to moderate the conversation. When he urged for engagement without nominating a person to speak (quoted above as Speech Event 6, 0:38 & 3:12), Student 4 tended to be somewhat explanatory in his language use in that he gave an indication of what it was he wanted the others to say (e.g., a list of modules suitable for teacher education curricula). By contrast, Student 4's acts of discussion moderation that were aimed at particular participants (quoted above as Speech Event 6, 6:38 & 7:04) consisted of more open-ended utterances: In the first case, no question was asked; Student 4 merely gave way for Student 3 to speak by drawing attention to her virtual hand being raised, whereas in the second instance he did ask a question, but it was a broad one (i.e., enquiring about Student 2's thoughts—whatever they may be). It appears, then, that Student 4's discussion-moderating utterances that were addressed to particular students were much less specific than the ones intended to be answered by any member of the group. In addition to the level of specificity, another aspect in which Student 4's acts of

discussion moderation differed from each other was length: When he nominated his groupmates to speak, Student 4's utterances were short and to-the-point, whereas his sentences were longer on those occasions when he nominated no person in particular. A final feature of Student 4's discussion moderation to note is that he seems to have paid attention to which of his groupmates had spoken. For example, when he nominated Student 2, everyone else had already shared their views on the discussion questions, which suggests that Student 4 may have known—either instinctively or consciously—upon whom he needed to call at that point. Thus, Student 4's awareness of his groupmates' contributions may have been the reason why he started to nominate his peers: He may not have asked Student 2 what her opinion was if she had shared some views prior to being nominated.

An aspect of communication that emerged from the data as a characteristic feature of Speech Event 6 at large (i.e., observed across speakers, not only in the case of a single person) was the participants' tendency to relate in some way to what their interlocutors said. The students appeared to make efforts to build connections between each other's turns, thereby achieving unity in the conversation. The utterances that were made to this end can be divided into three categories. The first of these was the explicit expression of agreement. Agreement was indicated mostly at the beginning of turns, and it seemed to be used as a transitional device: The students first agreed with what was said before and then went on to introduce their own point to the discussion. An example of this phenomenon occurred when Student 4 said, "yeah, I agree with you, [Student 5]. I was gonna also mention, like, digital literacy" (Speech Event 6, 5:55). In addition to Student 4, Students 3 and 7 also expressed agreement explicitly during the discussion. The second way in which the participants acknowledged their peers' contributions was by making overt reference to what the others said. In total, three instances of reference to an interlocutor's remark were identified in Speech Event 6; these were made by Students 2, 4, and 5. The discourse feature in question can be illustrated through Student 5's reference to a point made by Student 7: "Besides everything that you mentioned, I think teachers should be, erm, educated, and also teachers should be, erm, aware of the needs of students" (Speech Event 6, 4:53). Thirdly, there was also an example of paraphrasing, which is a form of acknowledgement of what has been said, but it is different from mere reference to a comment made by someone as it involves repeating the other person's utterance in the speaker's own words. Student 4 was the one who paraphrased when he was responding to Student 3: "OK, so you think that teachers

should… like should be doing research as well. So, in addition to teaching" (Speech Event 6, 6:53). In this case, the paraphrase also functioned as a clarification request; Student 3 explained what she had meant in response to Student 4's paraphrase.

In terms of interaction, one of the most interesting segments of Speech Event 6 came about when Student 7 experienced difficulty in trying to name a module that she wanted to recommend for inclusion in teacher education programmes. Although Student 7 was able to describe what she meant, she was unable to recall the exact words she needed. Therefore, Student 7 appealed for her interlocutors' help, and it was through cooperation between Students 4 and 7 that they resolved the communication problem. The dialogue unfolded in the following way:

1) Student 7: Erm, yes, for me, I think teaching, erm, I think the actual, the actually practice of teaching, so planning, I think it's important, uh, and as well as how to deliver a lesson and, and, you know, or what I'm, I guess this will be teaching practice. I don't know how to name it, but I mean, a class in which you learn how to plan, how to tailor the classes for your… and how to adapt. So, I guess that will be teaching practice that will entail all of it.

2) Student 4: Yeah. I think teaching practice might be when you actually go to the classroom. I think at [the university where Student 4 worked] the teaching practice refers to this.

3) Student 7: But what would it be the class in which you, like, are taught how to do that?

4) Student 4: Maybe methodology. It's like teaching methodology or something like this.

5) Student 7: Teaching methodo… OK. Teaching methods. Yes.

6) Student 4: Yeah. Teaching methods. Yeah. (Speech Event 6, 3:19)

For the purpose of the analysis, the participants' turns above have been numbered from 1 to 6. In turn 1, Student 7 started to outline what she considered essential in a teacher education programme, but she was hindered in her efforts to describe a module by the fact that she did not know what to call it. Only when Student 7 said "I don't know how to name it" was the linguistic obstacle indicated overtly, but the manner in which she had been speaking up to that point was arguably indicative of uncertainty. The markers of Student 7's uncertainty consisted primarily of repetition (e.g., "the actual, the actually") and hedging, which she seemed to be doing as she said "I think" three times within the breadth of a complex sentence. Prefacing her idea with "I guess",

Student 7 made a tentative suggestion (i.e., "teaching practice") before declaring that she did not know the name of the type of module she was talking about. However, not knowing the name of the module did not prevent Student 7 from trying to make herself understood: Following her admission that she did not know the term she needed, Student 7 carried on speaking and described what she meant. The beginning of the description was signalled by Student 7's saying the words "I mean", and the description itself resembled—to some extent—a dictionary definition. The next sentence Student 7 said (i.e., "So, I guess that will be teaching practice that will entail all of it") appeared to have two functions. On the one hand, it was a reiteration of her earlier point, namely that she believed "teaching practice" was the name of the module she was describing; it was a nearly verbatim repetition of the same idea expressed in the previous sentence. Thus, it can be seen as a kind of conclusion that Student 7 reached after deliberating over the term she needed. On the other hand, Student 7 was seeking confirmation that her presumption was correct as the sentence seems to have been intended to elicit a response. Although the transcript above deprives the utterance of its tonal characteristics, it can be heard on the recording that the declarative sentence had an interrogative illocutionary force: Student 7 said the whole sentence but particularly "teaching practice" with rising intonation, and she then waited for a response.

It was Student 4 who provided the response (i.e., turn 2), and his interpretation of the intention behind Student 7's utterance appeared to be similar to that of the researcher given that his response consisted of an explanation of what "teaching practice" might mean. Although Student 4 understood that his interlocutor's declarative sentence had been intended as a question, he did not seem to share Student 7's view about the meaning of the term "teaching practice". This can be inferred from the first sentence in Student 4's response: He contradicted his interactant's belief that teaching practice included input on lesson planning and said that it was limited to classroom teaching. However, Student 4 indicated his disagreement—presumably so as to mitigate the threat to Student 7's face—with elements of hedging in his speech: He began the sentence with "I think", and he used a modal verb in his description of what teaching practice *might* be despite seemingly having a clear idea of what it was. The contradiction was followed by justification, wherein Student 4 referred to his own context and explained that his understanding of teaching practice was influenced by it. It should be noted that Student 4 inserted a definite article before "teaching practice" in his second sentence, thereby restricting

the meaning of the term to the context that he was describing and allowing for the possibility that Student 7's understanding of it may be valid in a different context.

After the initial couple of turns, Student 7's communication problem had not been resolved as an answer had yet to be provided to her question about the name of the module. Therefore, Student 7 posed a question in turn 3, this time asking it in an overtly interrogative form (i.e., bringing the locutionary act into alignment with the illocutionary force). Not knowing the word for which she was looking, Student 7 was still forced to describe what she meant (i.e., "the class in which…") in her question. The response to the question was the expected adjacency pair: the answer (turn 4). Student 4 continued to hedge in his answer: He began turn 4 with the adverb "maybe" but went on to say that methodology was the answer to Student 7's question. Turn 5, then, can be interpreted as Student 7's acceptance of the answer: She started echoing "teaching methodology" at the same time as Student 4 was finishing his turn, but she stopped short of saying it in full and added "OK" possibly to indicate her acceptance of the term. She then repeated the newly learnt term but with a modification: Instead of "teaching methodology", Student 7 said "teaching methods". She added "yes" at the end of her turn, which may have been further indication of Student 7's acceptance of the term. With an answer to the question suggested and accepted, this could have been the end of the exchange, but it was not because Student 4 echoed what Student 7 had said: "Yeah. Teaching methods. Yeah". In turn 6, he repeated the word in the same form as he had heard it from Student 7 (i.e., "methods" rather than "methodology"), which may be a sign of reciprocity: Student 7 accepted Student 4's suggestion in turn 5, and Student 4 acted in kind in turn 6 by accepting what Student 7 had said. Student 4's final "yeah" in turn 6 marked the end of the exchange; Student 7 then carried on expressing the idea that she had begun to share before realising that she did not know what to call the module.

The episode analysed above is illustrative of Student 7's resourcefulness in overcoming a communication problem. Student 7 first drew attention to the linguistic issue she was facing and requested help implicitly. When she realised that the kind of help she needed was not forthcoming, Student 7 reformulated her question and asked it explicitly, which ultimately led to the resolution of the problem. It was, in part, an explicitness strategy that enabled Student 7 to find her way out of difficulty. However, what also seems clear is that reliance on the linguistic resources of her interactant enabled Student 7 to resolve the problem she had faced. Had it not been for Student 4's ability to supply the word that was needed, Student 7 would not have known

how to refer to the module that she was describing. It follows, then, that aside from the communication strategies that Student 7 appears to have employed, cooperation between the students was a central element of the dialogue. Student 4 exhibited cooperative behaviour in that he was not only able but also willing to step in and provide linguistic assistance by supplying the word his interlocutor needed. Due to the lexical nature of the communication problem, the question can be raised as to whether Student 4 was in a position to offer a solution because he was a native speaker of English, whereas the other students in the group were not. However, it is the researcher's contention that this was not the case. The fact that the word Student 7 required came from Student 4 was not necessarily underlain by differences between the participants' levels of language proficiency. Instead, it is more likely to have been a coincidence caused by the students' patterns of interaction: Based on the number of his turns, Student 4 had been a dominant participant throughout the discussion, and he was conversing with Student 7 when she asked the question; therefore, it was natural that Student 4 should respond and not someone else.

4.2.6.2.2   The Participants' Perspectives

The round of stimulated-recall interviews following Speech Event 6 was complete in the sense that emic data were collected from all five participants. The amount of time that elapsed between the conversation and the SRIs was the shortest in the case of Students 4 and 5, who both watched the stimulus and commented on it 5 days after the discussion had taken place. Student 3 was able to follow suit 6 days later, whereas Student 7 waited 7 days before watching the stimulus. The longest interval between the recording of the stimulus and the viewing of it occurred in the case of Student 2, who did her SRI 8 days after Speech Event 6. Despite the delays in providing emic data, the participants showed no obvious signs of difficulty in recollection. All students participated in the SRIs with their cameras turned on. The sound quality, however, was not always impeccable: Student 2's voice was faint and often difficult to understand for technical reasons; this was occasionally true for Student 5 as well. In addition, Student 7 was not in a noiseless environment at the time of her SRI. Nonetheless, the disturbances were not so severe as to render the recordings incomprehensible.

4.2.6.2.3   Student 2's Perspective

The comments that Student 2 made of her own accord ($n = 6$) outnumbered those that were elicited by the researcher ($n = 2$), which suggests that she still remembered the aspects of Speech Event 6 that had been salient to her in spite of the relatively long time that had passed

since the conversation. The insights that Student 2 provided into her perspective on the conversation can be arranged around three main themes: listening to her peers and being listened to, characteristics of her own language use, and Student 4's discussion moderation.

Student 2 gave the impression that she had, overall, found participation in the conversation interesting and enjoyable. What distinguished Speech Event 6 (and 5) from previous breakout room sessions was that the students did not have a text to discuss; instead, they were encouraged to share their own views in response to the discussion question. Therefore, several participants drew on their personal experience to make suggestions for topics to be included in teacher education programmes, which was something that Student 2 found more engaging than the discussions in which she had previously been involved. As she explained, "we are sharing each other's experience of each other's countries, and … talking about each other's experience, situation was very interesting and made me more attentive" (SRI 28, 5:38). Not only did the personal element of the conversation arouse interest in Student 2 and compel her to listen, but it also motivated her to speak. Having listened to Student 3's description of the structure of teacher education in her homeland and to Student 5's arguments for the modernisation of teacher education, Student 2 was inspired to share her views on the issue: "After listening to them, I remember that I decided that I need to talk my experience, my situation—then giving example of the subjects of our teacher education" (SRI 28, 11:50). Aside from enjoying the opportunity to learn more about the background of her groupmates and wishing to contribute to the discussion by sharing information about her own context, Student 2 was confident in herself when she spoke because she felt that she was thoroughly familiar with the structure of teacher education in her country, so talking about it was much less challenging than, say, discussing a set text would have been. As a result of receiving positive nonverbal feedback (e.g., nods and smiles) from her groupmates, Student 2 was left with the impression that she was being listened to and that what she said was well received. The convivial atmosphere of the conversation appears, at least in part, to have been the result of the fact that the task set for the students was not to discuss a reading; instead, they were to make suggestions based on their personal experience. The speaking task, then, afforded the students a degree of latitude in deciding what specifically to speak about in relation to the broad topic, which appears to have had a positive effect on participation. Student 2 remarked that group discussions were ordinarily "more formal, not

smiling, and very serious" (SRI 28, 2:26), but the atmosphere of Speech Event 6 was more relaxed and welcoming.

Even though the members of the group were friendly, it was not without unpleasant feelings that Student 2 took part in the conversation. Commenting on one of her own contributions to the discussion, Student 2 admitted to having been worried about her English, specifically her accent:

> When I speak in English, sometimes I'm very worried about my pronunciation. You know, my classmates' pronunciation is very clear. From the [teacher's name]'s course, I know that now native speaker pronunciation is not so important; there is a new concept of ELF, English as a lingua franca, et cetera, but, you know, after reading some articles about this one, I increased my confidence, but still, you know, I'm worried about my pronunciation. (SRI 28, 23:55)

Out of context, Student 2's words—put in the present tense—can deceive the hearer into thinking that her remark is to be understood in a general sense, but she stopped the stimulus whilst she was speaking on the recording to say what is quoted above; therefore, she is likely to have intended these words to reflect emotions felt during Speech Event 6. (Having said that, Student 2's general outlook on her English would be equally relevant given that a person's perspective on a particular speech situation must be influenced by how they feel in general about language use.) Although it was not apparent to an outside observer, speaking in English seems to have caused Student 2 considerable anxiety as she was "very worried" about her accent. She mentioned that the accents of her peers were "clear" compared to her own despite the absence of any indication from the others that Student 2 was not being understood. She also demonstrated her ELF awareness by explicitly mentioning English as a lingua franca and knowledge of ELF that she obtained as a result of coursework she had undertaken. The beneficial effect of learning about ELF communication was that Student 2 had gained some confidence in speaking; nevertheless, she was still worried about her accent. It is noteworthy that not even scholarly acquaintance with the realities of ELF was sufficient to allay Student 2's fears about speaking in English, which may mean that her conceptions of what constituted good English were deeply entrenched and possibly anchored to native speaker norms. In the specific context of Speech Event 6, concerns over comprehensibility appear to have contributed to Student 2's self-

consciousness about her accent: "Maybe, some of them maybe don't understand my speaking English because of the pronunciation" (SRI 28, 20:16).

The lack of self-esteem that resulted from Student 2's worries about her accent was partly the reason why she was appreciative of Student 4's efforts to moderate the discussion. Student 2 talked about the importance of the feedback she had received from her groupmates—both verbal and nonverbal. Responses to what Student 2 had said enabled her to ascertain whether she was being understood, thereby removing (some of) her fears about the comprehensibility of her accent. It was from Student 4 that she received the most feedback during Speech Event 6; as a result, Student 2 found Student 4's involvement in the discussion desirable even when he was not saying anything: "When I talk and [Student 4] is nodding, that is very encouraging; it feels that he understand me; he understand my talking. This, you know, encouraging is really getting me relaxed, getting me not worried" (SRI 28, 19:48). Student 2 found Student 4 to be a useful member of the group not only for the provision of encouragement but more generally because she believed "having a moderator is a good thing" (SRI 28, 14:06). The benefits of having a moderator, according to Student 2, included improved time management (e.g., being able to discuss all the questions in the allotted time) and simplified turn-taking (i.e., no need to wonder whether a window of opportunity for speaking would present itself). She personally experienced the latter as Student 4 at one point called on Student 2 to speak (quoted above as Speech Event 6, 7:04). Student 2 did not mind being nominated; in fact, it made a decidedly favourable impression on her: "He asked me, and, yeah, it is good thing; someone is asking about my thoughts and thinking and experiences… In our case, our classmates are very busy talking, and then not giving me time" (SRI 28, 16:03). Student 2 went on to say that she would have had to force her way into the conversation (e.g., by asking for permission to speak in an overt fashion) if it had not been for Student 4's question that allowed her to share her views. In Student 2's opinion, then, the discussion moderation carried out by Student 4 was helpful because it facilitated the discussion by permitting everyone to speak and by ensuring that the time available was used efficiently on the one hand, and it reduced Student 2's anxiety through the feedback and reassurance she received from him on the other.

4.2.6.2.4   *Student 3's Perspective*

Although Student 3 commented on as many as nine segments of the stimulus, only one of her comments was made of her own accord; all the others were brought to light by elicitation.

Nonetheless, she provided insight into some of the observable characteristics of the discussion as well as into aspects that were not visible on the recording and thus would have been impenetrable without her input. In terms of the overt features of Speech Event 6, Student 4's discussion moderation was salient not only in the researcher's view but also according to Student 3, who drew parallels between this conversation and the discussions of the module at large when she highlighted that Student 4 was "always a moderator in the group discussions" (SRI 26, 11:22). However, this was not something against which Student 3 voiced any objections at all. On the contrary, Student 3 was pleased to participate in a discussion which was being moderated by Student 4 because she regarded him as someone to whom it was worth listening. As she said, "I like it, and I'm happy with his appearance in the group discussion because I always like his ideas, and I look forward to hearing his opinions" (SRI 26, 11:33). Student 3 also noted that Student 4 would typically be able to help the group (i.e., whichever group they happened to be in together) reach conclusions at the end of discussions, which was why she looked to him for opinions and interpretations. In addition to being a moderator, Student 4 was seen as a motivator as well, which made him a key figure of the discussion in the eyes of Student 3: "His role is very important in the success of the group discussions because he can motivate other members to talk, and sometimes he lead the discussions" (SRI 26, 21:55). It is doubtful whether Student 3 was able to speak on behalf of the "other members" of the group, but her comment about the motivation that could be derived from Student 4's involvement is likely to have been applicable to her: She was, no doubt, motivated by Student 4—otherwise, she would not have mentioned it.

Beyond what was perceptible from the outside, insight was gained into Student 3's inner perspective on the context of Speech Event 6, which was more complex than it seemed. Student 3 revealed that both she and Student 7 had elected to take a module on language learning motivation and that they were attending it concurrently with the one in which the data collection for this study was carried out. Therefore, the amount of shared knowledge between them was greater than what would have been possible if they had attended only the module that yielded the Speech Events. This piece of information would not have become known if Student 3 had not been surprised to hear her groupmate talk about something that she associated with the other module they were attending together. She made the connection between their shared background knowledge (i.e., on motivation) and what was being said in Speech Event 6 when her peer started talking about motivation. Student 7 suggested motivation as a component that ought to be

included in teacher education programmes as she believed that prospective teachers needed to be knowledgeable about ways in which they can motivate their learners. This reminded Student 3 of the seminars they had attended together, and she summarised her thoughts on this realisation in the following way: "When [Student 7] shared her idea, I completely agreed with her at that time because I share her feelings and her thoughts, but I didn't think about it; I didn't remember it to share in the group discussion" (SRI 26, 18:29). Student 3 seems to have said what she did in order to highlight her agreement with her groupmate and to acknowledge that Student 7 had said something which she herself would have wanted to say if she had remembered it.

However, the episode also sheds some light on the complex nature of the context in which the discussion took place in that it illustrates its uniqueness and fluidity from one perspective. Student 3's conception of the specific context of Speech Event 6 was apparently shaped by the overlap between the two students' background knowledge and by the classroom context in a broader sense (i.e., their shared experience of studying together). It may have been a single word (e.g., "motivation") that evoked memories of the other module in Student 3, but from that point on the other seminar became relevant to her in the context of Speech Event 6. The context of the conversation, therefore, must have been somewhat different for each participant as they all brought to the discussion a unique set of previous experiences on which they relied to understand what was happening in Speech Event 6.

4.2.6.2.5   Student 4's Perspective

When looking back on Speech Event 6, Student 4 shared his recollections on four segments of the conversation voluntarily, and there were four further points at which his views were elicited by the researcher. One of the unexpected findings that emerged from the SRI was that Student 4's perception of his own role in Speech Event 6 differed from that of the researcher and those of the other students in that he did not see himself as a dominant participant in the conversation at all. Instead, Student 4 appeared to have thought of himself merely as a member of the group who had not contributed more to the conversation than any of his peers had done. Although not stated in so many words, this is the conclusion that can be drawn based on how Student 4 described the patterns of participation:

> I thought that was like a balanced kind of conversation overall; everyone contributed kind of like a more or less equal amount, I think. I think probably [Student 3] and [Student 2],

they monologued a bit longer than the others, but I think overall everyone gave their contributions; I think it was a nice discussion overall. (SRI 25, 24:11)

Another general observation that Student 4 made about Speech Event 6 pertained to the flow of the conversation, which he described as similar to "natural conversations because we did have previous experience with these things, and we had something to say" (SRI 25, 26:14). The experience to which Student 4 referred was had as a result of the fact that there was no set text to discuss; therefore, the students were able to carry out the speaking task with reliance on their personal experience rather than on what they (should have) read. Similarly to Student 2, Student 4 felt that it was, therefore, easier to participate in Speech Event 6 than in previous group discussions, which had often been reading-based and more theoretically-oriented. Despite Student 4's impression that all participants contributed to the conversation in equal proportions, he was aware of the discussion moderation that he did; what is more, he revealed that it had been a conscious effort. Explaining why he had asked Student 2 to share her thoughts, Student 4 said:

I think she had something to contribute, so I poked her a bit, and I was like, "hey, what do you think?" But I wouldn't do this in every case, so if there was, for example, a reading, and I can tell that someone didn't do the reading, then I wouldn't pressure them to say something. But in this case, I think all of us had something to say about this topic, and [Student 2] hadn't spoken yet, so I kind of gave her the go-ahead or the opportunity to do so. (SRI 25, 13:06)

It seems, then, that Student 4's perceptions of his groupmates' preparedness for interaction exerted considerable influence on his actions in Speech Event 6. Given that he explained his reasons for calling on his peers to speak and made it clear that he would not have done so if he had believed that they were not ready to talk, it can be concluded that Student 4's discussion moderation was not done in an indiscriminate fashion. Instead, he made conscious decisions to ask particular interlocutors to speak on the basis of his assumption that that they were both able and willing to do so, thereby providing his fellow students with a chance to say what they had wanted to. Student 4 appears not to have been mistaken in his approach to discussion moderation as his groupmates were, indeed, able to respond to his questions seemingly without being put under strain. Considered this way, Student 4's efforts to engage his groupmates in the discussion would make him seem less like a moderator and more like a

facilitator, whose involvement had an enabling effect on the others. Student 2's and 3's perspectives above are testament to this view.

Even though Student 4 indicated that he had something to say on the segment of the discussion in which he and Student 7 had considered the differences between "teaching practice" and "teaching methodology" (quoted above as Speech Event 6, 3:19), it was—contrary to the researcher's expectations—a less than revelatory remark. Instead of commenting on what he had thought about the episode, Student 4 asked questions in retrospect to establish whether what he had said was factually correct: "Am I right about that? The teaching practice is when they actually go to the classroom, right?" (SRI 25, 6:54). The questions are indicative of uncertainty on Student 4's part, which would explain why he had chosen his words carefully and hedged when trying to explain the difference between the two terms ("I think teaching practice might be", Speech Event 6, 3:54). Despite falling short of being revelatory, the finding that Student 4 was less than certain about the meanings of the terms that he was discussing with Student 7 is interesting because—overall—it was with an air of authority that he guided Student 7 by helping her find the right word to say what she meant. Nevertheless, these moments of Speech Event 6 do not appear to have been particularly striking from Student 4's perspective as he had nothing else to say on the matter.

In spite of having been one of the more loquacious members of the group, Student 4 refrained from expressing disagreement with his groupmates. In particular, he pointed to two instances in which he had not approved of what his interactants were saying. The first of these involved Student 3, who proposed that modules on research methodology ought to be included in teacher education curricula. Student 4, who happened to be attending another module in which the importance of research in teacher education had been debated, differed with her on the issue. As he explained, Student 3 suggested "including research methodology as part of the teacher training course …, but this was something that I kind of disagreed with that I don't think research methodology is something that is that important for teacher trainees" (SRI 25, 15:24). However, Student 4's disagreement was not discernible from his response at the time. Having heard the suggestion, he first asked Student 3 a clarification question to find out whether he had understood her correctly. When he received confirmation that his interpretation of Student 3's utterance was indeed correct, Student 4 said only, "uh-huh, OK" (Speech Event 6, 7:02) before going on to suggest that Student 2 should speak next. The second occasion when Student 4 took

issue with the proceedings was even more discreet given that it did not involve him. It was the turn-taking between Students 2 and 7 to which Student 4 objected: When Student 2 finished speaking, Student 7 continued without acknowledging what her groupmate had said. There was no transition between the turns other than the words "something else" uttered by Student 7 (Speech Event 6, 10:43); then, she simply started to speak about something different. In Student 4's opinion, this was not polite, and Student 7 should have commented on what Student 2 had said in order to "make the person feel like their contribution was meaningful" (SRI 25, 21:05). Nonetheless, Student 4 did not indicate his disapproval in any way.

4.2.6.2.6   *Student 5's Perspective*

Out of the participants of Speech Event 6, Student 5 was the first to watch the stimulus and comment on it; however, she did not seem to remember as much as some of her groupmates did. In total, she made remarks at five different points, but all of these were elicited by the researcher. Student 5 was also aware of the taciturnity of her SRI and acknowledged it towards the end by saying, "today I think I'm less talkative than other days" (SRI 24, 18:31). Nevertheless, Student 5 did provide insight into her thoughts about Student 4's role in Speech Event 6. Similarly to other students in the group, Student 5 held generally positive views on Student 4's discussion moderation and appreciated the benefits that were derived from it in terms of turn-taking and balance in the discussion. Speaking of Student 4, Student 5 started her description of the impression he had made on her by saying that "he is more intelligent, I think" (SRI 24, 13:55). The comment brought some levity into the SRI, but Student 5 insisted that she meant what she had said. However, she did not say the sentence in full (i.e., to make a comparative structure complete with "than" and another noun), which leaves the words open to interpretation: She may or may not have intended to say that one person in the group was superior to the others with regard to the power of reason. Student 5 proceeded to summarise what she had thought about Student 4's involvement in the moderation of the conversation in the following way:

> He can manage a group very well because he asks others and asks their ideas, lets the others speak one by one. And with this way, we are all happy because all the participants have an opportunity to participate in this discussion. And when one person is like a teacher among others and guides the others, I think it's the best way to participate all the members in the conversation. (SRI 24, 14:05)

Concerning Student 4's role in the discussion, Student 5 echoed the views of her fellow students—and particularly those expressed by Student 2: She agreed with her peers in that the discussion moderation carried out by Student 4 was helpful, for it allowed every member of the group to share their opinions and relieved them of the burden of having to seek an opportunity to speak. In addition to being satisfied with the discussion moderation on a personal level, Student 5 believed that the group at large were "all happy" as a result of Student 4's interventions. Furthermore, she likened her groupmate to a teacher, saying that Student 4's teacherly presence in the conversation was a source of guidance to the rest of the students and that it facilitated participation overall. What can be deduced from Student 5's remarks, then, is that she held Student 4 in high regard and welcomed his participation in Speech Event 6 not only for his contributions as a student but also for his involvement in the proceedings as a moderator and facilitator.

4.2.6.2.7   *Student 7's Perspective*

Not only did Student 7 appear to remember what her thoughts had been during Speech Event 6 well, but she was evidently willing to share her recollections given that she made comments on 11 segments of the stimulus, and all but two of her remarks were offered without elicitation. The aspects of Speech Event 6 on which Student 7 provided emic data can be categorised as follows: Firstly, she allowed insight into her perspective on the participation of Student 4 and the interaction with Student 4. Secondly, she shared her views on Student 3's contributions. Thirdly and finally, Student 7 revealed some of the thoughts that had occurred to her whilst listening to her groupmates. In addition to these findings, it transpired that the present study (i.e., the SRIs) had unnoticeably—and unexpectedly—influenced the conversation. Describing the impression that Student 4 had made on her when he initially assumed the role of the moderator, Student 7 disclosed that the stimulated-recall interviews in which she had participated prior to Speech Event 6 affected her thought process during Speech Event 6: "For some reason, I remember, because of these conversations, I tried to be more aware of what I'm thinking at the moment" (SRI 27, 3:14). It was perhaps due to this increased awareness that Student 7's SRI yielded rich data on Speech Event 6.

In respect of her perception of Student 4, Student 7 held views that did not differ substantially from those of her groupmates. Principally, Student 7 was pleased to observe that Student 4 was taking on the role of the moderator because it meant that she would not feel

obliged to do the same: "I remember thinking, I mean, [Student 4] always takes the lead, and I just felt glad I don't have to worry about that. … I remember thinking all the time he always takes the lead, like, leading the conversation" (SRI 27, 3:22). However, Student 7 made it clear that she had not thought of Student 4 as someone who had been in command of the conversation; she said, "it's not like he's in charge; I think more about myself: 'oh, I don't have to do extra'— that's how I think" (SRI 27, 4:31). There appears to have been more than one sentiment that characterised the manner in which Student 7 viewed Student 4's involvement in the discussion: On the one hand, she felt a sense of relief owing to the fact that Student 4 was proactive in ensuring that everyone in the group had an opportunity to speak as this meant that she had no such duty to fulfil; the implication of Student 7's remark was that she might have taken it upon herself to moderate the conversation if it had not been done by Student 4. On the other hand, she was acutely aware of Student 4's role in the discussion in this specific classroom context as well as in the broader context of their breakout room sessions: Student 7 was thinking that Student 4 was leading the discussion again because she had witnessed him do it on several previous occasions; therefore, Student 7's schematic knowledge of how particular groupmates of hers tended to behave in the general classroom context influenced the way in which she made sense of the interaction that took place in the specific context of Speech Event 6. She was not surprised to see Student 4 take on an active role because it was consistent with her expectations.

As one of the focal points of the analysis was when Students 4 and 7 had opened a dialogue with a view to clarifying the meaning of the term "teaching practice" (quoted above as Speech Event 6, 3:19), it would have been interesting to learn how satisfied Student 7 was with the explanation she received from Student 4 and what her impressions were more generally. However, she did not have anything to say on the segment of the stimulus in which she initiated the clarification of the term; instead, it was the beginning of her utterance that reminded Student 7 of why she had wanted to speak in the first place. It emerged that she had not been prompted to speak by a burning desire to suggest modules for inclusion in teacher education. Rather, Student 7 decided to succeed Student 4's turn with a turn of her own for fear of silence. As she put it, "I remember I wanted to avoid, again, the awkward silence. And I didn't even wait; I just went right away so there's no awkward silence" (SRI 27, 8:16). Indeed, Student 7 responded to Student 4's question (quoted above as Speech Event 6, 3:12) with the briefest of delays (i.e., about 1 second). Considered from her emic perspective, Student 7's eagerness to respond rapidly

may go some way towards explaining why she appeared hesitant at the beginning of her turn and why she needed help with the disambiguation of two terms shortly thereafter: Having been motivated to speak for the sake of avoiding silence, Student 7 is unlikely to have prepared for her turn extensively. Because what she was saying was something of an off-the-cuff remark, Student 7 found herself unable to express her thoughts with a sufficient degree of accuracy, hence her appeal for help.

In addition to describing her perceptions of various aspects of Student 4's involvement in the conversation, Student 7 commented on other groupmates as well. In particular, she cast light on what she had thought of Student 3's participation in the discussion. Despite her having had no direct interaction with Student 3 during Speech Event 6, Student 7 appeared to have regarded Student 3's contributions to the discussion somewhat less favourably than, say, those made by Student 4. For example, when Student 3 was responding to Student 4's initial question about the modules deemed necessary to include in teacher education (quoted above as Speech Event 6, 0:38), she (i.e., Student 3) suggested dividing the modules into different categories based on their foci. However, this was something that Student 7 believed to be unnecessary. Summarising her inner perspective on the proceedings, Student 7 said,

> I remember thinking that it was quite obvious at that time. I don't know if I'm being really judgemental. I think I was like, "this is really obvious, so let's go to the more important things". I was a little bit like, "let's not spend time in the obvious; let's go to the interesting things that we can add". But, of course, I didn't say anything; I was just waiting for everybody to say their things. (SRI 27, 5:36)

Not only on this occasion did Student 7 forbear to express her opinion; in fact, self-restraint seems to have been a recurrent theme in her participation in Speech Event 6 overall. Another example—also in connection with Student 3—of Student 7's avoidance of voicing her views occurred when Student 3 was listing modules that she had completed as part of a teacher education course. Even though it was a dialogue between Students 3 and 4 in the sense that Student 4 spoke on either side of Student 3's turn, Student 7—who was merely a listener at this point—found something objectionable in what she heard, but she decided against saying anything as her attitude was predominantly characterised by ambivalence:

I remember in that part not agreeing with this one, but it was like a conflict in me, like it's important, but at the same time I was just in a debate in my mind. … I remember not agreeing and agreeing, but I didn't say it because I wasn't sure. (SRI 27, 6:37)

Student 7 also highlighted ways in which she had drawn on her background knowledge whilst formulating an interpretation of what her groupmates had been saying. It happened, for example, when Student 2, in response to Student 4's question, was outlining what she saw as a problem with teacher education based on her personal experience. Once again, Student 7 was an active listener, but she refrained from commenting on the opinion stated by her peer. Instead of entering into interaction with Student 2, Student 7 pondered how her own background knowledge and experience intersected with the experience about which Student 2 was talking:

I had similar courses, but also I wanted to say some of the courses I didn't think they were necessary, but I didn't want to jump; I didn't want to say it. But at the time she was talking, I was kind of realising, kind of comparing my experience with hers, and then also kind of debating into I don't think that it didn't add any value to my teaching experience, but again I didn't say anything. While she was talking, I was listening—kind of invested, but also comparing and debating as well but only in my head. No intention of speaking at all. (SRI 27, 16:12)

The extracts above illustrate how Student 7 engaged with what was being said during Speech Event 6: Even though she did not speak much, Student 7 experienced a vast array of emotions and formed several opinions whilst listening to her groupmates. The richness of detail in her description of her emic perspective would indicate that Student 7 found the discussion stimulating beneath the surface; nonetheless, she showed few outward signs of engagement. The sentiments that Student 7 did not verbalise included disagreement, ambivalence, and boredom amongst others. When she did speak, Student 7 was motivated by a desire to prevent silence from ensuing rather than by a genuine urge to communicate her ideas; however, this is not to suggest that she did not mean what she said. In addition, Student 7 tended to view aspects of Speech Event 6 in the broader context of the module by drawing on her background knowledge of the participants from previous seminar discussions.

4.2.6.3 Summary

Despite the diversity of the SRI comments in terms of their substance and the times at which they were made, there were two points where the participants made overlapping remarks

on the stimulus. The first couple of comments occurred technically at the same time as Students 2 and 7 both shared their observations on the segment of the stimulus in which Student 3 was responding to Student 4's question about the components of teacher education programmes. When Student 3 was describing the modules that she had completed as a university student, Student 2 was enthralled to learn about teacher education in countries other than her own on the one hand and realised that the two of them had some shared experience on the other hand. Student 2's opinion (quoted above as SRI 28, 5:38) was that what Student 3 was saying was interesting, and it prompted her to share her own experience subsequently. By contrast, Student 7 saw Student 3's contribution in an entirely different light. It was Student 7's impression that Student 3 was stating the obvious, and this made her grow somewhat impatient as she was listening (quoted above as SRI 27, 5:36). Instead of approving of what Student 3 was saying and wishing to contribute to it in some way, Student 7 wanted the discussion to move on to more interesting aspects of the topic, thereby facilitating more efficient use of their time.

The second overlap in the SRI data consisted of observations that were put forward literally at the same time as both SRI comments were made at 6 minutes and 22 seconds of the stimulus, when Student 5 was giving utterance to the argument that teachers of languages needed to supplement coursebooks with "different other things" (Speech Event 6, 6:26) in order to improve the quality of education. From Student 2's perspective, this was a segment of the conversation that proved to be a catalyst for a contribution of her own (i.e., listening to Student 5 and to other students compelled her to share what she saw as related experience). From the viewpoint of Student 7, however, the words said by Student 5 (and subsequently by Student 4) achieved the opposite effect: Although she concurred with what was being said, Student 7 "didn't want to join" (SRI 27, 13:53) in and express her agreement. A summary of the times at which these comments were made is presented in Table 18 below along with the times of all the other observations that were offered by the SRI participants without elicitation.

Table 18

Points at Which SRI Participants Commented on the Stimulus

Participant	Comments made at								
Student 2	0:41	1:58	6:22	7:30	7:56	8:47			
Student 3	11:02								
Student 4	4:02	6:04	6:56	10:53					
Student 5	no voluntary remarks; comments elicited by the researcher at five points								
Student 7	0:53	1:49	2:16	3:25	4:52	6:22	8:14	9:06	10:21

In addition to what derives from the instances of overlap between the participants' comments, some more general findings about Speech Event 6 have emerged from the SRI data. First and foremost, Student 4's participation in the conversation was brought to the fore by the recollections of his groupmates. Interestingly, Student 4 did not consider himself to be a central participant of Speech Event 6, but his self-perception does not appear to have been echoed by his interlocutors, who unanimously opined that Student 4 had played an important role in the moderation of the discussion. What is more, the students held overwhelmingly positive views of the manner in which Student 4 presided over the conversation because they believed that his involvement facilitated the discussion overall (e.g., by enabling individuals to express their opinions). Another important finding concerns the use of English as a lingua franca: Even though the participants of Speech Event 6 were conversing in an ostensibly carefree fashion, it transpired that Student 2 had covertly been self-conscious about her accent. Her feelings of insecurity were caused primarily by concerns over the comprehensibility of what she was saying. Fortunately for Student 2, the feedback she received from her interactants, and particularly from Student 4, was indication enough that she was being understood. The SRI data also provided insight into the intricate ways in which context had taken shape in the participants' minds. Notably, the students' shared background knowledge and experience appeared to have been influencing the immediate classroom context of Speech Event 6, resulting in variation on an individual level in how the context of the discussion was perceived.

The value of these findings lies chiefly in the fact that much of this information would have been inaccessible to an outside observer if only the surface level of communication had been available for analysis. In the case of Speech Event 6, the analysis performed by the outside observer (i.e., the researcher) focused mostly on Student 4's dominance and the resultant orderliness of turn-taking, the manner in which the participants related to what other members of the group had said, and a dialogue in which Students 7 and 4 were discussing the differences between two terms. Out of these analytical foci, the importance of Student 4's role in the conversation was borne out by the participants' emic perspectives, and the various techniques used by the students to refer to one another's points were also considered—albeit to a lesser extent—important by the informants. Although the conversation between Students 7 and 4 (quoted above as Speech Event 6, 3:19) offered a wealth of material for the researcher to analyse, the episode had not made much of a mark on the participants involved. Student 7 revealed that

she had spoken merely to eschew silence, whereas Student 4 admitted to having been uncertain about what he had been saying. Ultimately, the participants' impressions of the exchange were different from that of the researcher, which is illustrative of the depth of understanding that can be gained by investigating the emic perspectives of those whose language use constitutes the object of enquiry.

4.2.7 *Discussion of the Results of the Intensive Analyses*

The findings presented above are based on six speech events, which were analysed from multiple perspectives. In addition to demonstrating the descriptive and explanatory potential of theories of language use in the study of pragmatic phenomena, the results of the analyses provide some insights into the processes in which speakers engage whilst conveying and interpreting meaning in context. It is apparent even upon a cursory examination of the findings that the students experienced their participation in the conversations in dissimilar ways in respect to one another, and the participants' perspectives also proved to be different from that of the researcher. However, the contrast between the various points of view is arguably not a shortcoming of this exploratory study. Indeed, the heterogeneity of views that emerged from the data is indicative of the complexity of ELF communication (Baird et al., 2014) in these classroom contexts and, by extension, of linguistic interaction at large. In a general sense, the diversity of perspectives appears to have resulted from underlying differences in the attribution of relevance (Sperber & Wilson, 1995). The researcher's view of the relevant features of the data was influenced by the analytical aims of the study; therefore, the inductive elements of the etic analyses were at the very least equalled if not outweighed by a deductive desire to establish connections between the data and theory. By contrast, the same conversations were seen differently by the participants, whose perceptions of relevance are likely to have been shaped by segments of their personal experience evoked through their engagement in communication in the specific contexts of the conversations.

As such, one of the most noteworthy findings of the study pertains to the role of schemata in language use. Although the importance of schematic knowledge in the interpretation of utterances has been highlighted by theoreticians (e.g., Widdowson, 2004), the process whereby speakers draw on various types of knowledge to understand what is being said remains elusive due to the difficulty involved in capturing the phenomenon by empirical means. The use of the stimulated recall data collection technique (Ryan & Gass, 2012) in the present thesis provides a

glimpse into this dynamic and highly complex aspect of language use. As mentioned previously, the extent to which access can be gained to speakers' thought processes is believed to be limited. Nonetheless, the analysis of the emic data unearthed empirical evidence of schema activation (Widdowson, 2007) during the discussions. This was particularly prominent in Speech Event 4, during which Student 3 had—as she later disclosed it—been explicitly aware of the connections between what was being discussed (i.e., academic misconduct and rules of referencing) and her personal experience (i.e., having been found guilty of academic misconduct). Thus, it emerged from the SRI that some of the language used in Speech Event 4 had, from Student 3's perspective, been indivisibly linked with prior personal experience, making the interpretation of those utterances unique to the hearer. Aside from this example, there were several other instances in which the participants had relied on their background knowledge (sometimes more implicitly) to understand what their interlocutors were saying. In Speech Event 5, for example, Student 10 interpreted Student 6's contribution to the discussion based on what she had known about him from working together in another seminar. Moreover, in Speech Event 6, Student 7 used her schematic knowledge of the classroom context to make sense of Student 4's discussion moderation. These empirical insights, then, echo Illés's (2020) view that "in the actuality of communication participants draw on schemata that necessarily include individual and idiosyncratic features" (p. 64). The broader implication that follows from this realisation is that outside observers' understanding of particular contexts of communication can never be identical to that of the participants; therefore, what researchers can attempt to do is "uncover *how* participants assign relevance" (Illés, 2020, p. 64) instead of trying to determine what is relevant.

In addition to the students' schematic knowledge, aspects of politeness proved to be salient features of the discussions from the participants' emic perspectives as well as from the researcher's analytical standpoint. The latter was guided by Politeness Theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987), which—as shown also in the translation device above (see Table 4)—served as the basis for a principled approach to data analysis, making it possible for the researcher to identify points of interest related to politeness externally (i.e., without having been an interactant in the conversations). Examples of such features of language use discovered through the etic analysis include potentially face-threatening acts made off record, the use of hedging to mitigate FTAs, and the participants' apparent reluctance to draw attention to their fellow students' nonstandard utterances (i.e., avoidance of making FTAs). In this sense, the findings of the

present study are different from those of Knapp's (2011) research, in which the mitigation of face threats was not among the characteristics of the participants' language use. The data, however, are similar to those analysed in Ferenčík's (2012) study in that overt indicators of politeness were not in abundance in the students' linguistic output, which made the complementation of the etic analysis with the incorporation of the language users' emic views a fruitful addition. The participants provided insights into their perceptions of politeness which would otherwise not have been uncovered. For instance, the students indicated that they had given consideration to the face of others before and during the formulation of utterances or that they had—even whilst not speaking—been aware of the threats posed to the face of fellow members of the group (e.g., in Speech Event 2, a direct question addressed to Student 5 was recognised by Student 2 as a potentially face-threatening act). Thus, the findings of the research indicate that the examination of complex pragmatic phenomena such as politeness may yield more comprehensive results if the analyst's etic view of the data is supplemented with emic information from the participants.

Apart from universal features of communication like those described in theories of language use, the data comprised phenomena that occur more typically in ELF contexts of interaction. One such aspect of communication is the effect that the physical context in which ELF interaction takes place has upon the interactants' language use. This was termed by Pölzl and Seidlhofer (2006) as the habitat factor, which is likely to influence linguistic interaction in situations when a speaker or a group of speakers consider the context of communication as their own territory (i.e., as opposed their interlocutors, who are not on home turf). With the interaction having been conducted entirely online, it would be reasonable to assume that the habitat factor—owing to the nonexistence of a shared physical context of communication—would not arise as a determinant of language use in this study. Nevertheless, this does not appear to have been the case. Some participants were more experienced students than others, and this difference seems to have affected the discussions. As a matter of fact, Students 4, 7, 9, and 10 had graduated from the university where the research was conducted before going on the pursue a postgraduate degree there, which made the online classroom contexts at the same university a more natural habitat for them than for those students who had enrolled for the first time. This was observed in the researcher's etic analysis of participation patterns and discussion moderation—particularly in the case of Students 4 and 10, who tended to be more active and perhaps more confident

contributors than their peers. Moreover, the habitat factor was also perceived and subsequently verbalised by the participants: Student 5, for example, thought it was only fitting that Student 10 should moderate the discussion in Speech Event 3 because the latter had prior experience of studying at the university. Unlike the language users in Pölzl and Seidlhofer's (2006) study, however, the participants of this investigation did not exhibit patterns of English usage that seemed unmistakably to have been influenced by the local language (i.e., Hungarian). This discrepancy between the findings of the two studies is explicable with reference to the fact that the participants of this enquiry—with the exception of Student 10—each spoke a first language other than Hungarian.

Another characteristic which makes the data analysed in this investigation similar to findings reported in the ELF literature (e.g., Björkman, 2014; Cogo, 2010; Hahl, 2016) is the participants' propensity for cooperation in a non-Gricean sense, that is, interactional work carried out collaboratively for enhanced understanding. This was manifest in instances where the students engaged in negotiation to establish meaning through exerting mutual communicative effort. According to Seidlhofer (2004), this type of negotiation is likely to be necessary when comprehension is hindered by unilateral idiomaticity, and this was, indeed, the case in Cogo's (2010) study, wherein the use of a unilaterally understood expression (the adjective "cheesy") necessitated negotiation. In the present investigation, a prominent example of meaning negotiation occurred in Speech Event 5 when Students 8 and 9 had to undertake additional interactional work in order for Student 8 to understand information imparted by her groupmate. However, the negotiation did not appear to have been triggered by unilateral idiomaticity as neither of the interactants indicated nonunderstanding of a word or phrase. Despite the thorough etic examination to which the episode was subjected, the root cause of the communication problem had remained opaque until the participants' emic perspectives were incorporated into the analysis. It was through Student 8's retrospective explanation that the reason for the initial nonunderstanding (i.e., an erroneous assumption about relevance) was revealed, and Student 9's emic views were also found to be a valuable addition in that she described how the linguistic interaction had been supplemented with nonverbal cues (i.e., facial expressions). Thus, it emerged from the analysis that the students had needed to negotiate meaning due to a schematic misunderstanding rather than to the one-sidedness of lexical comprehension. Nonetheless, a feature of the negotiation and of other examples in the data which is comparable to results

reported in the ELF literature is repetition. In the face of interactional difficulty, the students resorted to repetition, thereby demonstrating the recipient-oriented nature of ELF interaction also identified in Cogo's (2009), in Kaur's (2012), or in Smit's (2010) research.

An additional aspect of language use into which some insight has been gained through the analysis of the emic data is the students' self-perceptions as users of the English language. Although facets of the participants' English usage were analysed in an etic fashion both extensively and intensively, it would not have been possible to discover how the students had regarded their English used in the discussions without probing into their emic perspectives. It transpired that the attitudes of some students towards their own English language proficiency had been characterised by self-denigration. For instance, Student 2 avowed that she had been concerned when speaking in English because of her accent, which she deemed inferior to those of her peers. Similarly, Student 3 bemoaned the fact that sometimes she found herself unable to express her views with a high degree of accuracy in English and highlighted her belief that Student 4, who was a native speaker of English, would not be afflicted by the same problem. The comparisons that the students drew in the stimulated-recall sessions between themselves and their native English speaker groupmate are notable because these views had not been foregrounded in any way during the lessons. As Kalocsai (2014) stated, whether users of English in ELF contexts of communication "orient to each other's' [*sic*] language competence depends on the nature of relationships that are made relevant and are seen as appropriate in a given context" (Kalocsai, 2014, p. 199). In the context of this study, then, the participants did not assign relevance overtly to any student's perceived level of competence in English presumably because the relationship between the members of the group was not hierarchical. Nevertheless, the students were aware of differences between their Englishes, and they adopted a deficiency view of their own language skills when compared to someone who spoke English as a first language. This may be seen as a form of internalised native-speakerism (Holliday, 2006), which is unexpected particularly in the light of the students' ELF awareness (as evidenced by the emic data). The attitudes of self-reproach shown by some of the participants allow parallels to be drawn between the results of the present study and the findings obtained by Reményi (2017), who demonstrated—albeit with a somewhat different research focus—that native speakerism can be a self-imposed obstacle for nonnative speakers of English who use the language for ELF communication.

The results of the analyses conducted as part of the research point to the general conclusion that the combination of etic data analysis with emic information from research participants may bring about enhanced understanding of pragmatic phenomena. One of the benefits that seems to derive from the inclusion of multiple perspectives in pragmatic investigations is that the analysis can simultaneously be inductive and deductive, thereby combining the advantages afforded by both research traditions to produce results that represent the participants' realities with a higher degree of accuracy than what would otherwise be possible. As mentioned above, this is illustrated by the findings concerning politeness, the overt indicators of which were examined and interpreted through the researcher's etic analyses, resulting in theory-based descriptions of language use. At the same time, however, the students' perceptions of politeness were influenced by a number of covert factors, which could not have come to light without input sought directly from the participants. As the results of the enquiry have shown, a further advantage which can be gained by exploring participants' realities is that access to language users' emic perspectives allows a better understanding of the role of schemata in the meaning making process to be developed. Although the information obtained via retrospective interviews is by no means comprehensive, what language users reveal about connections between their background knowledge and words uttered in a particular context of communication is still infinitely richer than observations made based only on the surface level of interaction.

5 Conclusion

The incentive to conduct the present study derived from the recognition that language use ought to be analysed with a focus on language users. More specifically, the research was carried out in response to a perceived research niche within the domain of ELF pragmatics: Scholars in the field have tended to examine ELF communication by performing etic analyses of language use, which may provide insights into usage and interaction whilst leaving the emic experience of language users largely unexplored. Thus, the primary aim of the empirical investigation undertaken as part of this thesis was to analyse language use from both etic and emic perspectives in an academic context where students from heterogeneous first-language backgrounds communicate with one another via the medium of English as a lingua franca. To this end, an exploratory study was designed to enquire into the language use of international students in an online classroom context at a university in Hungary. The research endeavour was guided by three research questions, of which the first one was focused on the relevant features of the interactional data from the researcher's perspective (i.e., the etic view). The second question, by contrast, was aimed at the exploration of participant relevance, that is, the features of language use that the students whose ELF interactions comprised the data deemed salient (i.e., the emic views). The differences between the analyst's and the participants' perspectives and the implications that the dissimilarity may have for research and for language pedagogy constitute the focus of the third research question. In terms of methodology, the enquiry can be characterised as a multimethod (Jenkins, 2014) exploratory study given that two types of qualitative data were collected in order to answer the research questions: interactional data (i.e., naturally occurring speech events during which international students engaged in ELF communication) and emic data collected through SRIs (i.e., retrospective interviews with the students during which recordings of the speech events were used to facilitate recollection). The analysis of the data consisted of an extensive analysis of the entire dataset based only on the interactional data and of intensive analyses of a selection of six speech events based both on the interactional data and on the stimulated-recall data. The results of the former represent the researcher's etic view of the data, whereas the latter sheds light on participant relevance by exploring the students' views on the discussions.

5.1 Summary of the Research Results

Due to the scope and the exploratory orientation of the study, the analyses yielded a wide range of findings on various aspects of language use from several perspectives; accordingly, the results lend themselves more easily to being summarised separately rather than in amalgamation. The interactional data were initially analysed by the researcher in an entirely etic fashion (i.e., without input from the participants). The etic analysis was extensive in that it included the full set of the data which had been collected. The interactional data were analysed and coded, and the features identified, which amounted to 1,601 items spread across 36 codes, were organised into four main categories. The first group of codes consisted of features of the participants' language production. The category of language production included 12 codes, which were the following: repetition, questions, question tags, hesitation, hedging, searching for words, self-repair, false starts, instances of nonstandard usage, unfinished sentences, paraphrasing, and examples of idiosyncratic pronunciation. The language production of the students in this study appears to have been typical of ELF contexts in the light of the fact that some of these features echo what has been found in other ELF settings; in particular, repetition, questions, and self-repair have been widely discussed in the ELF literature (e.g., Björkman, 2011, 2012; Kaur, 2011, 2012; Konakahara, 2015; Lichtkoppler, 2007). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the features of language production outnumbered the items within every other category by some margin: Language production accounted for 56% of the segments of data that were coded. The prevalence of the features of language production compared to other features of the data may be explicable with reference to the etic nature of the analysis: Because features of usage are conspicuous, they are more likely to be noticed by outside observers than those features of language use that derive more directly from speakers' communicative intentions and schemata.

The extensive analysis of the interactional data resulted in the formation of three additional categories of codes: features of the interpersonal metafunction of language, features of the ideational metafunction of language, and features of discourse related to the channel of communication. Of these, the category of interpersonal language functions was comprised of 12 codes, which were attached to expressions of agreement, overlaps, responses to questions, clarification requests, apologies, references to interlocutors' remarks, acts of providing clarification, laughter, expressions of thanks, backchannelling, jointly created utterances, and instances of echo. The features were identified mostly on the basis of the presence of overt

indicators of interaction between the participants. One of the general findings which emerged from the analysis of the expressions of interpersonal functions was that interaction between the participants had been characterised by a spirit of cooperation and mutual support. The fact that the expression of agreement was the most commonly identified interpersonal feature is indicative of the students' inclination to interact with one another in a cooperative manner. Cooperation, once again, is an aspect of ELF communication which has been described in the research literature (e.g., Konakahara, 2015; Suviniitty, 2010). The features of the data that were seen as facets of the ideational metafunction of language were spread across eight codes, which included expressions of opinion, personal examples, general examples, acts of adding new ideas to the discussions, comments made on the readings, expressions of uncertainty, instances in which personal feelings were voiced, and discourse reflexivity. These features tended to reflect the speakers' experience and knowledge, making the expression of ideas in the form of opinions, examples, or feelings the most prominent indicator of ideational content. Having said that, the identification of the participants' ideational contributions to the discussions was rooted in the analyst's interpretation of the data, which may or may not have been in alignment with the students' actual intentions in saying what they did. The final category into which the features of the data were classified was related to the channel of communication: The online platform upon which the discussions were held was deemed to have been a determinant of the participants' discourse practices. The four discourse features that appeared to have been influenced by the medium of communication were discussion moderation, explicit marking of the ends of conversational turns, comments made on the technology which enabled the students to converse, and leave-taking. Due to being tied in with the specific context in which the interactions took place, these features can be considered distinct characteristics of the data examined in the present study; thus, they will not have been analysed in a similar way in other contexts of enquiry.

In addition to the extensive analysis of the data, intensive analyses of a subset of the data (i.e., six conversations) were carried out with reliance both on the interactional data and on emic data collected by means of stimulated recall in order to complement the researcher's etic analysis with the participants' emic views on the discussions. In the case of Speech Event 1, the researcher's analytical foci were concentrated predominantly on aspects of participation and of usage. It was noted that Students 7 and 10 had engaged in dialogue with one another—to the detriment of the involvement of the other members of the group. Student 9, in particular, was

unable to contribute to the discussion. In addition to conversing with Student 7, Student 10 was also acting as a moderator; in this capacity, she drew on knowledge believed to be shared by her peers. Repetition and hesitation were among the salient features of the students' language production, but instances of nonstandard usage were also observed. The exploration of the participants' perspectives on Speech Event 1 painted a somewhat different picture of the same conversation. The students had not ascribed importance to aspects of usage; instead, they commented on their personal motivations behind their behaviour in the course of the discussion. Student 7, for instance, admitted having spoken purely for the avoidance of silence. She also highlighted the importance of comments made by Student 10, which boosted Student 7's self-confidence. It emerged from Student 9's recollections that she had not spoken because she had struggled to remember the details of the set text. Student 9 also mentioned that even though her views had differed from those held by Student 6, she had opted not to participate in the discussion as the differences of opinion were not so important as to require an intervention on her part. The retrospective views expressed by Student 10 offered valuable insights into Speech Event 1 as they contradicted the researcher's perceptions in at least two instances. Unlike the researcher, Student 10 did not see herself as a moderator of the discussion; she merely attempted to facilitate the conversation by asking a few questions. Student 10 also explained that she had not intended to signal her attentiveness by her use of backchannelling whilst conversing with Student 7; instead, she was attempting to bring about a change of topic. Even more interestingly, it transpired that Student 10's expression of agreement with Student 7 had not, in fact, been heartfelt.

Speech Event 2 was considered by the researcher to have been a balanced and natural conversation on the whole. In addition to Student 3's difficulty in selecting the appropriate pronoun to refer to a person of unknown gender, aspects of pragmatics such as discourse reflexivity, a repetition request, schema activation, and the joint construction of talk comprised points of salience from the etic perspective. As expected, the students' emic experience of participation in Speech Event 2 was different. Student 2 drew attention to what she had perceived as a lack of connection with her groupmates: Because no one expressed agreement with her explicitly, Student 2 felt unsupported by her peers. She noted, however, that the lack of connection with the others had meant that discord was less likely to arise. Student 2 also expressed contradictory views concerning Student 5's inactivity: Although she sympathised with

her fellow discussant on account of the face threat that being asked a direct question posed to Student 5, Student 2 was not satisfied with Student 5's excuse for failing to answer the question appropriately. Student 3's explanation of what had happened when she was thinking of which pronoun to use in reference to a researcher indicated that the etic analysis of the occurrence was to be reassessed. Student 3's question about the gender of the scholar was an appeal for help in the researcher's assessment, whereas Student 3 clarified that her question—in reality—had been underlain by no such intention. Student 3's comments also gave prominence to the role background knowledge plays in communication as Student 3 had based her assumptions during Speech Event 2 on her schematic knowledge of the context and the participants. Similar views were expressed by Student 4, who had likewise drawn on his familiarity with his groupmates in the course of interacting with them during this specific speech situation. Moreover, Student 4 accepted responsibility for what he referred to as the derailment of the conversation, but he added that he had deliberately introduced an off-topic element into the discussion as he wanted to socialise with his fellow students at the end of the speaking task. Student 5 confirmed that she had not spoken due to having been unwell during Speech Event 2, which is consistent with what she said at the time. What she did not say during the discussion was that she struggled with the comprehension of some of her groupmates' accents. Student 5 also expressed her preference for Student 4's native English accent over Student 8's nonnative one. Remarkably, Student 8 made a similar point about the superiority of Student 4's English compared to the proficiency of the rest of the group. In addition, Student 8 aired her complaints about the inadequacy of Student 3's contribution to the discussion and about the lacklustre attempt made by Student 5 to answer the question addressed to her.

Aside from focusing on Student 10's discussion moderation and on the importance of questions in the discussion, the researcher's pragmatic analysis of Speech Event 3 was theoretically oriented in that it centred around pragmatic phenomena such as adjacency pairs, self-repair combined with the eschewal of Firth's (1996) let-it-pass principle, and an overt example of a comprehension check. Unsurprisingly, theory was less important from the participants' perspectives. Student 1's emic views provided crucial evidence for the ever-present influence of multilingualism on ELF communication: He explained that he had been chatting (in writing) to one of his fellow students in Spanish whilst engaging in spoken discussion with the rest of his groupmates in English. Furthermore, Student 1 described the multiple perspectives

from which he had observed the proceedings: As a student, he valued Student 10's efforts to keep the discussion going; however, he was able to draw also on his teacherly experience, and as a teacher, he had a different opinion of Student 10's participation. Appreciation for Student 10's discussion moderation was also expressed by Student 2, who felt that her groupmate's efforts made participation in Speech Event 3 easier. Nonetheless, Student 2 was dissatisfied with Student 10's tendency to respond to her contributions by saying only "OK", and she found Student 10's accent difficult to understand. Student 2 also demonstrated her ELF awareness by asserting that she had paid special attention to the comprehensibility of her own accent specifically because of the ELF context. Student 5's retrospective assessment of Student 10's endeavours to moderate the discussion highlighted the perceived significance of schematic familiarity with the context of communication: Student 5 welcomed what Student 10 did because Student 10 was better acquainted with the context than Student 5. In the same way, Student 7 appreciated Student 10's moderation of the talk exchange but for a different reason: Student 7— as always—was anxious for silence to be avoided, and Student 10's participation meant that someone was speaking. Student 7 also recounted how her self-confidence had fluctuated depending on the reactions that her contributions had elicited. Unlike on previous occasions, Student 10 was conscious of her discussion moderation in Speech Event 3; this was partly because of her prior participation in an SRI in which her inclination to take charge of conversations had been discussed. Additionally, Student 10 talked about the importance of her schemata in the interpretation of the specific situation; had she not been taught by the teacher of the module before, she would not have understood the task and the topic in the way she did.

In Speech Event 4, discussion moderation was once again identified by the researcher as a significant aspect of the interaction, but this time it was Student 4 who controlled the direction of the conversation. Besides moderating the discussion, Student 4 contributed to Speech Event 4 in other ways, which included sharing an anecdote about Chinese students who had plagiarised. The story about the plagiarists was deemed salient because Student 4 had seemingly been circumspect in phrasing his message in such a way that would avoid causing offence, and it was also seen as a manifestation of the speaker's schemata in the specific context of the conversation. In this case, some of the emic perspectives overlapped with the etic analysis, though not entirely. Student 3 concurred with the researcher's assessment regarding the role Student 4 had adopted in the discussion, and she revealed that she had considered English language proficiency an

important underlying factor: Student 3 believed that Student 4 was a more capable moderator than the others because English was his first language; at the same time, Student 3 expressed her lack of contentment with her own English skills. From Student 3's perspective, some of Student 4's utterances also acted as schema activators. Student 4 provided insights into his discussion moderation by outlining its deliberateness, and he elucidated his circumspection with reference to his awareness of the face threat which his anecdote about Chinese students had potentially posed to his East Asian groupmates. What is more, Student 4 shone a light on the relativity of relevance by pointing out that he had not found Student 9's contribution relevant. Participant relevance was interrogated further through Student 8's emic views, which revealed that Student 8 had found Student 4's story relevant only in relation to the discussion of international teaching experience; the point about plagiarism that Student 4 had attempted to make by sharing the anecdote appeared to have bypassed Student 8 entirely. Student 8 also drew on her background knowledge of her interlocutors when deciding to whom she would address particular questions. Previous experience also influenced the conduct of Student 9, who—prior to this lesson—had discussed plagiarism too many times to feel any enthusiasm for it during Speech Event 4. Nevertheless, Student 4's anecdote proved to be a catalyst in that it activated Student 9's schema of Chinese students and prompted her to contribute to the discussion by sharing a story of her own.

The students' participation patterns remained at the forefront of the researcher's attention in the analysis of Speech Event 5. The complete absence of activity on Student 1's part was particularly noticeable, whereas Student 8 stood out among the rest due to the high number of her conversational turns. In addition, it was observed that Student 10 had acted like a moderator. The analyst also identified three main ways in which explicitness had characterised ELF communication in Speech Event 5: The participants greeted each other at the beginning of the discussion, thereby acknowledging that they were conversing in a new context (i.e., a breakout room); Student 6 requested permission to speak and marked the end of his contribution explicitly; Students 8 and 9 engaged in overt negotiation of meaning. Nevertheless, the participants informed the analysis of Speech Event 5 in valuable ways by disclosing the emic views they had held during the conversation. Student 1, for instance, divulged the reason why he had remained silent throughout the discussion: Although he had relevant experience and ideas to share, he simply did not understand the speaking task which they were to carry out, so he thought

it best not to engage in it. He also talked of his appreciation for Student 10's discussion moderation and pointed out that Student 10's behaviour had matched his schematic view of how the students tended to act in this classroom context. The differences between emic and etic interpretations came to the fore when Student 8's perceptions of Student 6's contribution were compared to those of the researcher: What was analysed as a discourse marker by the researcher was simply a sign of politeness in the eyes of Student 8. Relevance was highlighted once again as a key element in the interpretation of meaning when Student 8 explained why she had found it necessary to negotiate the meaning of Student 9's utterance. The same episode appeared to have been less important from the perspective of Student 9, who regarded the success of their joint attempt at meaning negotiation as a matter of little consequence. Unlike the others, Student 10 was preoccupied with what Student 6 had said. This was because the two had similar professional interests, which meant they had a greater amount of shared knowledge between them, and the schematic familiarity with what Student 6 was saying engendered interest in Student 10 and compelled her to correct a perceived misunderstanding. Student 10 also acknowledged that she had undertaken the task of discussion moderation because she believed it was necessary and because she did not feel like contributing to the conversation in other ways.

The etic analysis of Speech Event 6 was similar to previous analyses in that it focused on some of the same pragmatic phenomena such as adjacency pairs, the perceived illocutionary force behind a locution, and the use of hedging in an apparent attempt at mitigating the face threat of an utterance. In addition, Student 4's participation was noted owing to the high number of his conversational turns and because of the discussion moderation in which he engaged via some of those turns. A cooperative effort exerted by Students 7 and 4 to resolve a communication problem was also described as a salient aspect of interaction during Speech Event 6. As per usual, the participants' emic perceptions of the conversation were more personal. Student 2, for example, found the conversation more engaging than the previous discussions because the open-ended speaking task allowed her to share personal experiences with her groupmates, and this motivated her to speak. Importantly, however, speaking also made Student 2 feel inhibited due to concerns over the comprehensibility of her accent. Despite her ELF awareness (which she explicitly mentioned in her SRI), Student 2 was speaking with a sense of unease during Speech Event 6. By contrast, Student 3 was more interested in listening to her groupmates than in speaking; in particular, she enjoyed listening to Student 4 and considered his

endeavours to moderate the discussion to be a vital component of Speech Event 6. Although Student 5 did not say much about Speech Event 6 in retrospect, she revealed that she had been satisfied with Student 4's discussion moderation as she believed it had a facilitative effect on the proceedings. Student 7 was similarly pleased with Student 4's active involvement in the discussion mostly because it meant that she did not have to speak. Moreover, she remarked on the connection between what had happened in Speech Event 6 and her schematic knowledge of the classroom context: She expected Student 4 to take charge of the discussion because he always did. Considering the researcher's and every other student's opinion, Student 4's self-assessment came as a revelation: He had not deemed himself a dominant participant in the conversation. Nevertheless, he admitted having taken on the task of discussion moderation in a deliberate fashion. Another fact that came to light as a result of the analysis of the emic data provided by Student 4 was that he had concealed his disagreement with Student 3's views during the discussion.

5.2 Response to the Research Questions

The summary of the findings allows a few general but comprehensive statements to be put forward in response to the research questions. The first research question, then, can be answered with reference to the results of both the extensive analysis and the intensive etic analyses. From the researcher's analytical perspective, the salient features of language use in this context of ELF communication were frequently predetermined by theory, making the enquiry a somewhat deductive enterprise: The analyst was disposed to recognise relevance on the basis of previous research. In this sense, the findings of the etic analyses can be considered a form of validation of theoretical models of language use such as the Cooperative Principle, Politeness Theory, or Speech Act Theory. It ought to be noted, however, that salience was chiefly ascribed to what appear to be surface-level features of language use, pertaining mostly to language production and to usage. As shown by the extensive analysis of the data, the researcher's examination of the interactions highlighted more features of the participants' language production than of any other facet of their language use. In a similar vein, the intensive etic analyses concentrated on participation patterns such as discussion moderation or turn-taking as well as on meaning negotiation and on aspects of usage. Although some expressions of the ideational metafunction of language were also identified, the number of these was small in

comparison. Thus, the researcher's etic analysis was focused predominantly on aspects of language use that were outwardly noticeable.

The answer to the second research question is less straightforward due to the diversity of factors that appeared to have influenced the participants' emic experience of communication in the ELF context explored in this thesis. From the students' emic perspectives, the relevant features of language use cannot be delimited in a similarly finite manner as in the case of the etic analysis. Although it is difficult to predict what might take on significance in a given interaction, the heterogeneity of interpretations can be foregrounded as an overarching feature of (ELF) communication from the perspectives of the participants. The findings have demonstrated that an utterance is seldom interpreted by hearers in the same way as it is intended by the speaker. The relevance of linguistic input seems to depend on the schematic knowledge of interlocutors: A point made by a speaker may not be apprehended by hearers unless they can relate it to what they already know, and this also depends on how well the interlocutors know one another. Furthermore, it is important to emphasise that the students in this study tended to be unaware of the differences that underlay the surface level of their language use, which would make them labour under the misapprehension that they perfectly understood one another. It seems that differences in the participants' schematic knowledge (i.e., their perceptions of context) were the most important factors influencing language use in this setting. The students invariably drew on their general background knowledge and topic-specific schemata in the interpretation of language within the specific contexts of the speech events, which simultaneously bore out theoretical descriptions of language use (e.g., Widdowson, 2004) and guaranteed disparity in meaning on the personal level of speakers. It was the language users' individual schemata that determined the salient features of language use from the students' perspectives. As such, it can be posited that salience from the participants' emic perspectives emerges from within and, thus, cannot be externally established.

The third research question, which was aimed at the description of the differences between the etic and the emic perspectives on language use as well as at the examination of the implications that the differences may have for the applied linguistic profession, can be answered in two parts. The first part of the response concerns the differences between the researcher's and the participants' perspectives, which have been illustrated in rich detail throughout the thesis. It has been shown that the etic–emic dichotomy is somewhat misleading as it ought not to be seen

as a binary distinction between two perspectives. In reality, there are multiple emic perspectives (i.e., at least as many perspectives as participants in a speech event), and the emic perspectives may differ from each other to the same degree as they differ from the researcher's etic perspective. It is shared knowledge between the participants that appears to facilitate successful language use, which implies that the extent of common ground engenders difference or similarity between perspectives, though this is something that needs to be ascertained on a case-by-case basis as there are always bound to be differences.

Despite the dissimilarity between the students' perspectives, their emic views on language use appeared to differ in two notable ways from the etic perceptions. Both points were related to the use of English, and it can be hypothesised that a connection may exist between them. The first aspect in which the etic and the emic views noticeably differed pertained to the importance attached to nonstandard usage. The results clearly demonstrate that features of language production—including usage—were among the foci of the etic analysis, whereas nonstandard usage does not seem to have been a concern from the participants' emic perspectives given that they never mentioned it. The students did not make instances of nonstandard usage relevant during their group discussions (e.g., by drawing attention to them), and neither did they comment on usage at any point during the retrospective SRIs. On the face of it, the absence of reference to nonconformity with Standard English usage may be indicative of indifference on the part of the students. After all, they used English as a lingua franca in a highly international context, which may have disincentivised them from wishing to observe norms of correctness traditionally associated with Inner Circle (Kachru, 1996) usage.

However, this does not appear to have been the case in the light of the second English-related difference between the etic and the emic perspectives on language use: consideration shown for the participants' status as native and nonnative speakers of English. With regard to speakership, the attribution of relevance was reversed: The outside observer's etic analysis seemed largely to gloss over the disparities between the students' English language skills, whereas the participants were acutely aware of the differences. In this respect, the stimulated-recall data proved immensely valuable as this facet of the students' language awareness would never have manifested itself if it had not been for the recollections shared privately with the researcher. It emerged from the SRIs that some of the participants had been self-conscious about speaking in English due to their dissatisfaction with their accents and proficiency. This is a novel

finding that sheds some light on concerns with which speakers may be preoccupied whilst engaging in ELF interaction. Furthermore, the students could not help but see their native English speaker groupmate as the touchstone of linguistic competence—and a standard they were unable to reach. This, then, is a major difference between the perspectives. From the researcher's point of view, all of the students participating in the study were seen as users of English on an equal footing; any other assessment would have constituted a challenge to the prevailing orthodoxy of ELF research. By contrast, the emic perspectives of the participants were at odds with this view; some students—unbeknownst to the rest of the group—found differences in language proficiency to be highly relevant and a cause for concern in the context of the seminar discussions.

The second part of the answer to the third research question can be provided by outlining the implications of the findings. The empirical results of the study have the potential to supply ELF researchers with food for thought. As the analyses of different perspectives on language use have conveyed a sense of the complexity of ELF communication in the context examined, the findings may induce investigators to consider the appropriacy of the reductionist approach which has mostly characterised empirical research on ELF (Pitzl, 2022). In order for ELF communication to be captured and analysed in its full complexity, innovation in research methodology seems to be necessary as etic analyses may not be capable of shedding much light on language use from speakers' emic perspectives. This research project represents an attempt at bridging the gap between those perspectives; hence, the study may be considered as a step towards the development of research methods that permit the complexity of language use in ELF contexts to be explored—to a degree—by empirical means such as via the hitherto underutilised stimulated recall technique to capture participants' perspectives. The complexity ELF interaction in the present investigation also implies the importance of multimodal pragmatics (O'Halloran et al., 2014) given that meaning was reconstructed by the participants and the researcher alike through engagement with multimodal video data. A secondary research implication pertains to the description of ELF as a linguistic phenomenon. Features of usage (e.g., lexicogrammar) and pragmatic strategies (e.g., the negotiation of meaning) have been suggested in the literature as suitable descriptors of the attributes of ELF communication (e.g., Cogo, 2010; Mauranen, 2006; Pitzl et al., 2008), but the results presented in this study have indicated that the content of utterances (i.e., ideation) may play a more influential role in shaping speakers' perceptions of

language use than surface-level features such as usage. Consequently, the outcomes of the research have highlighted the importance of accounting for the ways in which speakers' schemata bear upon their language use.

Pedagogical implications also derive from the findings of the present thesis. A key question that has been of interest to ELF scholars and language teachers alike is how students of English can be prepared for using the language successfully in contexts of international communication. According to Seidlhofer and Widdowson (2020), "the relationship between descriptions of language use and prescriptions of language for learning has long been an issue in the pedagogy of English language teaching" (p. 324) because communicative language teaching attempts to present learners with models of English that do not necessarily suit their communicative needs in the specific settings in which they may wish to put their language skills to use. Indeed, the results of the present study have shown that it is difficult to predict what features of language and context will become relevant for participants in ELF communication. As a result, those in the language teaching profession are faced with an unfeasible task if they harbour ambitions of teaching their learners how to use English in every conceivable context. For this reason, Illés (2020) suggested that "Teaching Language as Communication … can provide the basis for an ELF-informed approach to ELT" (p. 129). The essence of this pedagogical approach lies in the combination of language use and language learning: Instead of learning English for subsequent use, students use the language for communication and for learning something about the world. For this to happen, language teachers need to engineer opportunities for learners to engage in authentic language use in the classroom, which may be achieved, for example, through content and language integrated learning (Illés, 2020).

5.3 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Although the empirical investigation reported herein was conducted in good faith and with adherence to the principles of the relevant research methodology, it should be acknowledged that the specific characteristics of the data collection and data analysis procedures employed in this study place some limitations on the research findings. The first of these is the unpredictability of the results. Because the exploration of participant relevance was one of the aims of the study, it was not possible to anticipate what features of the data would turn out to be relevant. This, however, is arguably not so much a weakness of the research design as a strength. By describing the seemingly arbitrary ways in which elements of context may become

significant in the process of communication, the enquiry has—to some extent—demonstrated the complexity of language use particularly in ELF situations. The second potential limitation, which is closely related to the first one, is that the findings obtained via the researcher's analyses are unique to this investigation and unlikely to emerge in an identical fashion from a similar study. This is because the analyst engaged with the data schematically in much the same way as the students had done in the course of their interactions; thus, the lack of replicability is to be expected both in the case of the researcher's analysis and of the participants' perceptions of the relevant features of language use. Thirdly, the amount of time which elapsed between the speech events and the retrospective SRIs is believed to have imposed a genuine limitation on the results on account of its detrimental effect on the participants' ability to remember what had happened during the discussions. The fourth and perhaps most important limitation is imponderable: It concerns the participants' willingness to give a truthful and uncensored account of the views they held and the feelings they experienced during the speech events. They appear to have done so, but there is no way of establishing whether this was the case.

Finally, it is worth considering what research aims may be deserving of pursuance in future studies given that there is ample room for empirical work in the rich field of ELF pragmatics. The most obvious direction for further research is in the immediate context of the present thesis: Even though this research project has reached its completion, it would be worthwhile to carry on collecting data from the same participants more longitudinally if the opportunity arose to do so. It is hypothesised that each speech event is a distinct context of communication in which language use is influenced by participants' unique sets of schemata, but the collection (and subsequent analysis) of additional data over an extended period would allow this supposition to be stated with more certainty. Furthermore, as the results of this investigation are based on language use in an online context of communication, valuable insights could be obtained by conducting a follow-up study under similar conditions but in a physical classroom context. The findings of such an enquiry could be compared to those of the present one, and the juxtaposition may give some indication as to what features of language use are peculiar to online settings of ELF interaction. Concerning methodology, it has been demonstrated that the stimulated recall technique facilitates the exploration of language users' emic perspectives; thus, the outcomes of the present study may promote the adoption of this mode of enquiry in future research. More generally, it is hoped that the research domain of ELF pragmatics will see an

increase in the prevalence of emic orientations to data analysis and that researchers working on lingua franca encounters will set the discovery and description of the complexity of language use as their primary objective.

References

Al-Hindawi, F. H., & Alkhazaali, M. A. R. (2016). A critique of politeness theories. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *6*(8), 1537–1545. http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0608.03

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000

Asian Corpus of English. (n.d.). *Basic information of ACE*. The Education University of Hong Kong. https://corpus.eduhk.hk/ace/About.html

Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford University Press.

Bailey, J. (2008). First steps in qualitative data analysis: Transcribing. *Family Practice*, *25*(2), 127–131. https://doi.org/10.1093/fampra/cmn003

Baird, R., Baker, W., & Kitazawa, M. (2014). The complexity of ELF. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *3*(1), 171–196. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2014-0007

Bjørge, A. K. (2010). Conflict or cooperation: The use of backchannelling in ELF negotiations. *English for Specific Purposes*, *29*(3), 191–203. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2009.04.002

Björkman, B. (2011). Pragmatic strategies in English as an academic lingua franca: Ways of achieving communicative effectiveness? *Journal of Pragmatics*, *43*(4), 950–964. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2010.07.033

Björkman, B. (2012). Questions in academic ELF interaction. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *1*(1), 93–119. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2012-0005

Björkman, B. (2013). *English as an academic lingua franca: An investigation of form and communicative effectiveness*. De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110279542

Björkman, B. (2014). An analysis of polyadic English as a lingua franca (ELF) speech: A communicative strategies framework. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *66*, 122–138. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2014.03.001

Björkman, B. (2018). "This is not familiar to most people": Navigating peer reviewers' comments and knowledge construction practices by PhD students in supervision interactions. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *7*(2), 225–228. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2018-0018

Borg, S. (1998). Teachers' pedagogical systems and grammar teaching: A qualitative study. *TESOL Quarterly*, *32*(1), 9–38. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587900

British Council. (2013). *The English effect: The impact of English, what it's worth to the UK and why it matters to the world* (Report No. D096). https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/english-effect-report-v2.pdf

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge University Press.

Canagarajah, S., Kimura, D., Shahri, M. N. N., & Amory, M. D. (2020). Toward an expansive interactional analysis. In J. McKinley & H. Rose (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of research methods in applied linguistics* (pp. 500–513). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367824471

Chaudenson, R. (2003). Geolinguistics, geopolitics, geostrategy: The case of French. In J. Maurais & M. A. Morris (Eds.), *Languages in a globalising world* (pp. 291–297). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511613739.018

Chung, C. J., Biddix, J. P., & Park, H. W. (2020). Using digital technology to address confirmability and scalability in thematic analysis of participant-provided data. *The Qualitative Report*, *25*(9), 3298–3311. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2020.4046

Cogo, A. (2009). Accommodating difference in ELF conversations: A study of pragmatic strategies. In A. Mauranen & E. Ranta (Eds.), *English as a lingua franca: Studies and findings* (pp. 254–273). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Cogo, A. (2010). Strategic use and perceptions of English as a lingua franca. *Poznań Studies in Contemporary Linguistics*, *46*(3), 295–312. https://doi.org/10.2478/v10010-010-0013-7

Cogo, A., & Dewey, M. (2006). Efficiency in ELF communication: From pragmatic motives to lexico-grammatical innovation. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, *5*(2), 59–93. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.12

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203029053

Collins. (n.d.). Lingua franca. In *Collins Online Dictionary*. Retrieved November 17, 2020, from https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/lingua-franca

Cook, G. (2003). *Applied linguistics*. Oxford University Press.

Council of Europe. (2020). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Companion volume*. https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4

Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511486999

Cuyvers, K., Van den Bossche, P., & Donche, V. (2022). Longitudinal case study research to study self-regulation of professional learning: Combining observations and stimulated recall interviews throughout everyday work. In M. Goller, E. Kyndt, S. Paloniemi, & C. Damşa (Eds.), *Methods for researching professional learning and development: Challenges, applications and empirical illustrations* (pp. 579–600). Springer Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-08518-5_26

Davis, S. (1987). The distinction between pragmatics and semantics. In J. V. Verschueren & M. Bertuccelli Papi (Eds.), *The pragmatic perspective: Selected papers from the 1985 International Pragmatics Conference* (pp. 685–694). John Benjamins Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1075/pbcs.5.49dav

Dempsey, N. P. (2010). Stimulated recall interviews in ethnography. *Qualitative Sociology*, *33*, 349–367. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-010-9157-x

Dombi, J. (2020). Supportive moves in intercultural ELF interactions: A study on discourse-level realizations of external request modification. In A. Fekete, M. Lehmann, & K. Simon (Eds.), *UPRT 2019: Empirical studies in English applied linguistics in honour of József Horváth* (pp. 96–121). Lingua Franca Csoport. https://books.google.hu/books?id=NkglEAAAQBAJ&printsec=copyright&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies*. Oxford University Press.

Dunn, C. D. (2011). Formal forms or verbal strategies? Politeness theory and Japanese business etiquette training. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *43*(15), 3643–3654. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2011.06.003

Ermida, I. (2006). Linguistic mechanisms of power in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: Applying politeness theory to Orwell's world. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *38*(6), 842–862. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2005.05.008

Farkas, Á. (2020). A pragmatic analysis of linguistic humor: Understanding situation comedy. In Cs. Kálmán (Ed.), *DEAL 2020: A snapshot of diversity in English applied linguistics* (pp. 73–93). Eötvös University Press. https://edit.elte.hu/xmlui/handle/10831/51485

Farkas, Á. (2023). A pragmatic analysis of ELF communication: A group discussion in an international university context from etic and emic perspectives. In A. M. Wind & B. Dóczi (Eds.), *DEAL 2023: Multiple perspectives in English applied linguistics* (pp. 179–207). Eötvös University Press. https://doi.org/10.21862/ELTE.DEAL.2023.7

Ferenčík, M. (2012). Politeness aspects of ELF interaction: A discussion of a conversational encounter from the VOICE corpus. *Prague Journal of English Studies*, *1*(1), 109–132. https://doi.org/10.2478/pjes-2014-0006

Firth, A. (1996). The discursive accomplishment of normality: On 'lingua franca' English and conversation analysis. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *26*(2), 237–259. https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166(96)00014-8

Flowerdew, J. (1990). Problems of speech act theory from an applied perspective. *Language Learning*, *40*(1), 79–105. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1990.tb00955.x

Fukada, A., & Asato, N. (2004). Universal politeness theory: Application to the use of Japanese honorifics. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *36*(11), 1991–2002. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2003.11.006

Gass, S. M., & Mackey, A. (2000). *Stimulated recall methodology in second language research*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410606006

Gendler Szabó, Z. (Ed.). (2005). *Semantics versus pragmatics*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199251520.001.0001

Gilks, K. (2010). Is the Brown and Levinson (1987) model of politeness as useful and influential as originally claimed? An assessment of the revised Brown and Levinson (1987) model. *Innervate*, *2*(2009–2010), 94–102. https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/english/documents/innervate/09-10/0910gilksbrownlevinson.pdf

Gillon, B. S. (2008). On the semantics/pragmatics distinction. *Synthese*, *165*(3), 373–384. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-007-9186-5

Gimenez, T., El Kadri, M. S., & Calvo, L. C. S. (Eds.). (2018). *English as a lingua franca in teacher education: A Brazilian perspective*. De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501511776

Gotti, M. (2014). Explanatory strategies in university courses taught in ELF. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *3*(2), 337–361. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2014-0020

Graddol, D. (2006). *English next: Why global English may mean the end of 'English as a Foreign Language'*. British Council. https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/pub_english_next.pdf

Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and semantics, volume 3: Speech acts* (pp. 41–58). Academic Press.

Hahl, K. (2016). Co-constructing meaning and context in international teacher education. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *5*(1), 83–105. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2016-0004

Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning*. Edward Arnold.

Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1989). *Language, context, and text: Aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2004). *An introduction to functional grammar* (3rd ed.). Hodder Arnold. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203783771

Haugen, E. (1966). Dialect, language, nation. *American Anthropologist*, *68*(4), 922–935.

Holliday, A. (2006). Native-speakerism. *ELT Journal*, *60*(4), 385–387. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccl030

Holloway, I., & Galvin, K. (2024). *Qualitative research in nursing and healthcare* (5th ed.). Wiley Blackwell. https://www.perlego.com/book/4211295/qualitative-research-in-nursing-and-healthcare-pdf

House, J. (2002). Communicating in English as a lingua franca. *EUROSLA Yearbook*, *2*(1), 243–261. https://doi.org/10.1075/eurosla.2.15hou

House, J. (2003). English as a lingua franca: A threat to multilingualism? *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *7*(4), 556–578. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2003.00242.x

House, J. (2010). The pragmatics of English as a lingua franca. In A. Trosborg (Ed.), *Pragmatics across languages and cultures* (pp. 363–387). De Gruyter Mouton.

Howitt, D. (2016). *Introduction to qualitative research methods in psychology* (3rd ed.). Pearson.

Huddleston, R., & Pullum, G. K. (2005). *A student's introduction to English grammar*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511815515

Hülmbauer, C., Böhringer, H., & Seidlhofer, B. (2008). Introducing English as a lingua franca (ELF): Precursor and partner in intercultural communication. *Synergies Europe*, *3*(2008), 25–36. https://gerflint.fr/Base/Europe3/hulmbauer.pdf

Hutchby, I., & Wooffitt, R. (2008). *Conversation analysis* (2nd ed.). Polity Press.

Illes, E. (2001). *The definition of context and its implications for language teaching* [Doctoral dissertation, University College London]. UCL Discovery. https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10018870/7/Illes,%20Eva_Redacted.pdf

Illés, É. (2020). *Understanding context in language use and teaching: An ELF perspective*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429274589

Illés, É., & Bayyurt, Y. (Eds.). (2024). *English as a lingua franca in the language classroom: Applying theory to ELT practice*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003258698

Jenkins, J. (2000). *The phonology of English as an international language: New models, new norms, new goals*. Oxford University Press.

Jenkins, J. (2009). English as a lingua franca: Interpretations and attitudes. *World Englishes*, *28*(2), 200–207. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.2009.01582.x

Jenkins, J. (2012). English as a lingua franca from the classroom to the classroom. *ELT Journal*, *66*(4), 486–494. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccs040

Jenkins, J. (2014). *English as a lingua franca in the international university: The politics of academic English language policy*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203798157

Jenkins, J. (2015). Repositioning English and multilingualism in English as a lingua franca. *Englishes in Practice*, *2*(3), 49–85. https://doi.org/10.1515/eip-2015-0003

Jenkins, J. (2022). Accommodation in ELF: Where from? Where now? Where next? In I. Walkinshaw (Ed.), *Pragmatics in English as a lingua franca: Findings and developments* (pp. 17–34). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501512520-002

Jenks, C. J. (2012). Doing being reprehensive: Some interactional features of English as a lingua franca in a chat room. *Applied Linguistics*, *33*(4), 386–405. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/ams014

Kachru, B. B. (1996). World Englishes: Agony and ecstasy. *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, *30*(2), 135–155. https://doi.org/10.2307/3333196

Kalocsai, K. (2014). *Communities of practice and English as a lingua franca: A study of Erasmus students in a Central European context*. De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110295511

Kaur, J. (2009). Pre-empting problems of understanding in English as a lingua franca. In A. Mauranen & E. Ranta (Eds.), *English as a lingua franca: Studies and findings* (pp. 107–123). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Kaur, J. (2011). Raising explicitness through self-repair in English as a lingua franca. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *43*(11), 2704–2715. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2011.04.012

Kaur, J. (2012). Saying it again: Enhancing clarity in English as a lingua franca (ELF) talk through self-repetition. *Text & Talk*, *32*(5), 593–613. https://doi.org/10.1515/text-2012-0028

Kaur, J. (2016). Conversation analysis and ELF. In M.-L. Pitzl & R. Osimk-Teasdale (Eds.), *English as a lingua franca: Perspectives and prospects* (pp. 161–168). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501503177-023

Kaur, J. (2022). Pragmatic strategies in ELF communication: Key findings and a way forward. In I. Walkinshaw (Ed.), *Pragmatics in English as a lingua franca: Findings and developments* (pp. 35–54). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501512520-003

Kecskes, I. (2019). *English as a lingua franca: The pragmatic perspective*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316217832

Kirkpatrick, A. (2003). English as an ASEAN lingua franca: Implications for research and language teaching. *Asian Englishes*, *6*(2), 82–91. https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2003.10801120

Kirkpatrick, A. (2010). Researching English as a lingua franca in Asia: The Asian Corpus of English (ACE) project. *Asian Englishes*, *13*(1), 4–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2010.10801269

Knapp, A. (2011). Using English as a lingua franca for (mis-)managing conflict in an international university context: An example from a course in engineering. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *43*(4), 978–990. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2010.08.008

Komori-Glatz, M. F. (2017). *English as a business lingua franca in multicultural student teamwork: An EMEMUS study* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Vienna]. PHAIDRA. https://phaidra.univie.ac.at/o:1340881

Konakahara, M. (2015). An analysis overlapping questions in casual ELF conversation: Cooperative or competitive contribution. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *84*(2015), 37–53. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2015.04.014

Labov, W. (1972). *Sociolinguistic patterns*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge University Press.

Levinson, S. C. (2016). Turn-taking in human communication – Origins and implications for language processing. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, *20*(1), 6–14. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2015.10.010

Levinson, S. C., & Torreira, F. (2015). Timing in turn-taking and its implications for processing models of language. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *6*(731), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00731

Lewis, C., & Deterding, D. (2022). The pragmatics of other-initiated repair in ELF interactions among Southeast Asians. In I. Walkinshaw (Ed.), *Pragmatics in English as a lingua franca: Findings and developments* (pp. 107–126). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501512520-006

Lichtkoppler, J. (2007). 'Male. Male.' – 'Male?' – 'The sex is male.' – The role of repetition in English as a lingua franca conversations. *Vienna English Working Papers*, *16*(1), 39–65. https://anglistik.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/i_anglistik/Department/Views/Uploads/0701ALL.PDF

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.

Lopez-Ozieblo, R. (2018). Disagreeing without a 'no': How teachers indicate disagreement in a Hong Kong classroom. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *137*(2018), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2018.08.016

Markee, N. (2013). Emic and etic in qualitative research. In C. A. Chapelle (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of applied linguistics* (pp. 1–4). Blackwell Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0366

Maton, K., & Chen, R. T.-H. (2016). LCT in qualitative research: Creating a translation device for studying constructivist pedagogy. In K. Maton, S. Hood, & S. Shay (Eds.), *Knowledge-building: Educational studies in Legitimation Code Theory* (pp. 27–48). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315672342

Mauranen, A. (2006). Signaling and preventing misunderstanding in English as lingua franca communication. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *2006*(177), 123–150. https://doi.org/10.1515/IJSL.2006.008

Mauranen, A. (2010a). Features of English as a lingua franca in academia. *Helsinki English Studies*, *6*, 6–28. https://blogs.helsinki.fi/hes-eng/files/2010/12/Mauranen_HES_Vol6.pdf

Mauranen, A. (2010b). Discourse reflexivity – A discourse universal? The case of ELF. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, *9*(2), 13–40. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.216

Mauranen, A. (2023). *Reflexively speaking: Metadiscourse in English as a lingua franca*. De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110295498

Mauranen, A., & Ranta, E. (2008). English as an academic lingua franca – The ELFA project. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, *7*(3), 199–202. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.108

Mauranen, A., Hynninen, N., & Ranta, E. (2010). English as an academic lingua franca: The ELFA project. *English for Specific Purposes*, *29*(3), 183–190. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2009.10.001

Maykut, P., & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide*. The Falmer Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203485781

McKay, S. L. (2006). *Researching second language classrooms*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410617378

Meyer, E. (2014). *The culture map: Decoding how people think, lead, and get things done across cultures*. PublicAffairs.

Modiano, M. (2003). Euro-English: A Swedish perspective. *English Today*, *19*(2), 35–41. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078403002074

Mollin, S. (2006). English as a lingua franca: A new variety in the new Expanding Circle? *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, *5*(2), 41–57. https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.11

Mortensen, J. (2013). Notes on English used as a lingua franca as an object of study. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *2*(1), 25–46. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2013-0002

Mostowlansky, T., & Rota, A. (2020). Emic and etic. In F. Stein (Ed.), *The open encyclopedia of anthropology* (online ed.). Open Knowledge Press. http://doi.org/10.29164/20emicetic

Murphy, M. L. (2018). *The prodigal tongue: The love–hate relationship between American and British English*. Penguin Books.

Murray, H. (2003). Swiss English teachers and Euro-English: Attitudes to a non-native variety. *Bulletin Suisse de Linguistique Appliquée*, *77*, 147–165.

Murray, N. (2012). English as a lingua franca and the development of pragmatic competence. *ELT Journal*, *66*(3), 318–326. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccs016

Nguyen, N. T., McFadden, A., Tangen, D., & Beutel, D. (2013). Video-stimulated recall interviews in qualitative research. In J. White (Ed.), *Proceedings of the 2013 international conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education* (pp. 1–10). Australian Association for Research in Education. https://www.aare.edu.au/data/publications/2013/Nguyen13.pdf

O'Halloran, K. L., Tan, S., & E, M. K. L. (2014). Multimodal pragmatics. In K. P. Schneider & A. Barron (Eds.), *Pragmatics of discourse* (pp. 239–268). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110214406-010

Ogiermann, E. (2018). Discourse completion tasks. In A. H. Jucker, K. P. Schneider, & W. Bublitz (Eds.), *Methods in pragmatics* (pp. 229–256). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110424928-009

Paltridge, B. (2021). *Discourse analysis: An introduction* (3rd ed.). Bloomsbury Academic. https://www.perlego.com/book/3028286/discourse-analysis-an-introduction-pdf

Pavlenko, A. (2006). Russian as a lingua franca. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *26*, 78–99. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190506000055

Pietikäinen, K. S. (2018). Misunderstandings and ensuring understanding in private ELF talk. *Applied Linguistics*, *39*(2), 188–212. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amw005

Pietikäinen, K. S. (2020). On second language/nonnative speakerism in conversation analysis: A study of emic orientations to language in multilingual/lingua franca couple interactions. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *169*(2020), 136–150. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2020.05.017

Pitzl, M.-L. (2010). *English as a lingua franca in international business: Resolving miscommunication and reaching shared understanding*. VDM Verlag.

Pitzl, M.-L. (2022). From *cross* to *inter* to *trans* – *cultural pragmatics on the move: The need for expanding methodologies in lingua franca research. In I. Walkinshaw (Ed.), *Pragmatics in English as a lingua franca: Findings and developments* (pp. 55–80). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501512520-004

Pitzl, M.-L., Breiteneder, A., & Klimpfinger, T. (2008). A world of words: Processes of lexical innovation in VOICE. *Vienna English Working Papers*, *17*(2), 21–46. https://anglistik.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/i_anglistik/Department/Views/Uploads/0802ALLfinal.pdf

Pölzl, U., & Seidlhofer, B. (2006). In and on their own terms: The "habitat factor" in English as a lingua franca interactions. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *2006*(177), 151–176. https://doi.org/10.1515/IJSL.2006.009

Reményi, A. Á. (2017). Native-speakerism as an obstacle to teacher mobility in the EU: Interviews with Hungarian teachers of English. In É. Illés & J. Sazdovska (Eds.), *Looking forward, looking back* (pp. 90–106). IATEFL-Hungary. https://iatefl.hu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Looking-Forward-Final-publication.pdf

Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (4th ed.). Pearson Education. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315833835

Riekkinen, N. (2010). "This is not criticism, but…" Softening criticism: The use of lexical hedges in academic spoken interaction. *Helsinki English Studies*, *6*, 75–87. https://blogs.helsinki.fi/hes-eng/files/2010/12/Riekkinen_HES_Vol6.pdf

Rudwick, S. (2022). *The ambiguity of English as a lingua franca: Politics of language and race in South Africa*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429031472

Ryan, J., & Gass, S. (2012). Stimulated recall. In R. Barnard & A. Burns (Eds.), *Researching language teacher cognition and practice: International case studies* (pp. 144–161). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847697912-010

Sacks, H., Schegloff, E. A., & Jefferson, G. (1974). A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Language*, *50*(4), 696–735. https://doi.org/10.2307/412243

Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage Publications.

Sanchez, H. S., & Grimshaw, T. (2020). Stimulated recall. In J. McKinley & H. Rose (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of research methods in applied linguistics* (pp. 312–323). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367824471

Sato, T., Yujobo, Y. J., Okada, T., & Ogane, E. (2019). Communication strategies employed by low-proficiency users: Possibilities for ELF-informed pedagogy. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *8*(1), 9–35. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2019-2003

Schegloff, E. A., & Sacks, H. (1973). Opening up closings. *Semiotica*, *8*(4), 289–327. https://doi.org/10.1515/semi.1973.8.4.289

Schegloff, E. A., Jefferson, G., & Sacks, H. (1977). The preference for self-correction in the organization of repair in conversation. *Language*, *53*(2), 361–382. https://doi.org/10.2307/413107

Searle, J. R. (1971). What is a speech act? In J. R. Searle (Ed.), *The philosophy of language* (pp. 39–53). Oxford University Press.

Seidlhofer, B. (2001). Closing a conceptual gap: The case for a description of English as a lingua franca. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *11*(2), 133–158. https://doi.org/10.1111/1473-4192.00011

Seidlhofer, B. (2004). Research perspectives on teaching English as a lingua franca. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *24*, 209–239. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190504000145

Seidlhofer, B. (2005). English as a lingua franca. *ELT Journal*, *59*(4), 339–341. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/cci064

Seidlhofer, B. (2009). Common ground and different realities: World Englishes and English as a lingua franca. *World Englishes*, *28*(2), 236–245. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.2009.01592.x

Seidlhofer, B. (2015). English as a lingua franca and multilingualism. In J. Cenoz, D. Gorter, & S. May (Eds.), *Language awareness and multilingualism* (pp. 391–404). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02325-0_22-1

Seidlhofer, B., & Widdowson, H. (2020). What do we really mean by ELF-informed pedagogy? An enquiry into converging themes. In M. Konakahara & K. Tsuchiya (Eds.), *English as a lingua franca in Japan: Towards multilingual practices* (pp. 323–331). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-33288-4

Smit, U. (2010). *English as a lingua franca in higher education: A longitudinal study of classroom discourse*. De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110215519

Spencer-Oatey, H., & Zegarac, V. (2010). Pragmatics. In N. Schmitt (Ed.), *An introduction to applied linguistics* (2nd ed., pp. 70–88). Hodder Education. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203783733

Sperber, D., & Wilson, D. (1995). *Relevance: Communication and cognition* (2nd ed.). Blackwell.

Suviniitty, J. (2010). Lecturers' questions and student perception of lecture comprehension. *Helsinki English Studies*, *6*, 44–57. https://blogs.helsinki.fi/hes-eng/files/2010/12/Suviniitty_HES_Vol6.pdf

Szabó, Cs. M. (2018). Challenges of Hungarian higher education institutions in meeting international student needs. In É. Illés & J. Sazdovska (Eds.), *Dimensions, diversity, and directions in ELT* (pp. 13–22). IATEFL-Hungary. https://iatefl.hu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2016_3D_conference_Selections.pdf

Taguchi, N. (2022). From SLA pragmatics to ELF pragmatics: (Re)conceptualising norms of appropriateness. In I. Walkinshaw (Ed.), *Pragmatics in English as a lingua franca: Findings and developments* (pp. 189–202). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501512520-010

Thompson, A. (2022). Interjections in spoken ELF interactions. In I. Walkinshaw (Ed.), *Pragmatics in English as a lingua franca: Findings and developments* (pp. 147–166). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501512520-008

Thongphut, A., & Kaur, J. (2023). "Doing Explicit" in hospitality and tourism service encounters in English as a lingua franca. *English for Specific Purposes*, *70*(April 2023), 224–236. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2023.01.003

Twain, M. (1897). *Following the equator: A journey around the world*. American Publishing Company. https://archive.org/details/followingequator00twaiuoft/page/n7/mode/2up

Tweedie, M. G., & Johnson, R. C. (2022). *Medical English as a lingua franca*. De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110697025

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (n.d.). *Other policy relevant indicators: Inbound internationally mobile students by continent of origin*. http://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=3804

VOICE. (n.d.). *About VOICE*. Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities and Cultural Heritage. https://voice.acdh.oeaw.ac.at/aboutvoice/

Walkinshaw, I. (Ed.). (2022). *Pragmatics in English as a lingua franca: Findings and developments*. De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501512520

Walkinshaw, I., & Kirkpatrick, A. (2014). Mutual face preservation among Asian speakers of English as a lingua franca. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *3*(2), 269–291. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2014-0017

Wang, Y. (2021). Interpersonal formulaic sequences in ELF academic lectures: Methodological challenges. In K. Murata (Ed.), *ELF research methods and approaches to data and analyses: Theoretical and methodological underpinnings* (pp. 143–157). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003021650

Wardhaugh, R. (2006). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (5th ed.). Blackwell Publishing.

Wei, L. (2020). Ethnography: Origins, features, accountability, and criticality. In J. McKinley & H. Rose (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of research methods in applied linguistics* (pp. 154–164). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367824471

Westerman, D. A. (1991). Expert and novice teacher decision making. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *42*(4), 292–305. https://doi.org/10.1177/002248719104200407

Widdowson, H. (2015). ELF and the pragmatics of language variation. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, *4*(2), 359–372. https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2015-0027

Widdowson, H. G. (1979). *Explorations in applied linguistics*. Oxford University Press.

Widdowson, H. G. (1994). The ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, *28*(2), 377–389. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587438

Widdowson, H. G. (1997). EIL, ESL, EFL: Global issues and local interests. *World Englishes*, *16*(1), 135–146. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-971X.00054

Widdowson, H. G. (2004). *Text, context, pretext: Critical issues in discourse analysis*. Blackwell Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470758427

Widdowson, H. G. (2007). *Discourse analysis*. Oxford University Press.

Wilkinson, S., & Kitzinger, C. (2011). Conversation analysis. In K. Hyland & B. Paltridge (Eds.), *The Continuum companion to discourse analysis* (pp. 22–37). Continuum.

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.

Zainil, Y., & Arsyad, S. (2021). Teachers' perception of their code-switching practices in English as a foreign language classes: The results of stimulated recall interview and conversation analysis. *Sage Open*, *11*(2), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211013802

Zein, S. (Ed.). (2019). *Teacher education for English as a lingua franca: Perspectives from Indonesia*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203730522

Appendix A

Lesson Observation and Stimulated Recall Consent

I hereby authorise Árpád Farkas (henceforth the researcher) to observe the lessons of [Name of the Module] in which I am participating with my consent. In addition, I consent to participate in follow-up sessions of stimulated recall either individually or in small groups. I have been informed of what the lesson observation and the stimulated recall entail, and I have no objection against participating in either. I am aware that what I say during the observed lessons and the stimulated recall sessions may be recorded and that the researcher may use the recordings for research purposes. I acknowledge that my participation in the researcher's study is voluntary. I do, however, retain the right to request, on an individual basis, that the researcher refrain from using particular utterances of mine if I should deem them sensitive. My consent is given on the condition that my participation in the study is anonymous, and my identity, therefore, will remain undisclosed. My authorisation will remain valid for the duration of the spring term of the [redacted] academic year.

Please type your name here.

Appendix B

Codes Produced in the Course of the Extensive Analysis of the Interactional Data

Code	n
repetition	194
question	145
hesitation	104
hedging	90
searching for words	85
opinion	78
self-repair	78
agreement	76
false start	61
moderating discussion	56
example (personal)	53
nonstandard	49
question tag	45
overlap	44
example (general)	38
adding an idea to the discussion	36
comment on reading	29
response to question	27
clarification request	26
unfinished sentence	26
uncertainty	24
apology	23
marker of end of turn	23
reference to interlocutor's remark	22
clarification provided	21
laughter	19
comment on technology	17
expression of thanks	17
backchannelling	16
paraphrase	13
personal feeling	12
pronunciation	12
discourse reflexivity	11
jointly created utterance	11
echo	10
leave-taking	10
approval	8
disagreement	8

Code	*n*
COVID-19	6
reassurance	6
technical problem	6
appeal for help	5
difficult subject	5
difficulty remembering	5
humour	5
signals forthcoming question	5
summary	5
greeting	4
indirect speech	4
solidarity	4
adjacency pair	3
comment on personal language use	3
comprehension check	3
giving way	3
granting permission	3
off-topic	3
apology acceptance	2
asking for permission	2
didn't take notes	2
idiolectal idiom	2
idiom	2
parallel structure	2
self-deprecation	2
suggestion	2
synonym	2
description	1
face threatening act?	1
L1 influence	1
let-it-pass	1
misunderstanding	1
negotiation of meaning	1
nominalisation	1
offer of help	1
other language	1
request	1
unknown word	1