CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research was to explore the roles of the English language teaching coursebook through studying how one coursebook, *American Headway 2*, was interpreted and used by instructors teaching an undergraduate English course at a University in Thailand. This chapter presents how the study was conducted under the following headings:

1. Research procedure and data collection
2. Course and material
3. Participants
4. Research instruments
5. Data analysis
6. Ethical considerations

Research Procedure and Data Collection

The procedure for collecting data is presented in the following flow chart.

| Contact Department to get the time schedule of the teachers |

| Teachers agree to participate in study and sign consent forms |

| Classroom observation for six classes using Ch.6 of American Headway 2 |

| First video viewing with the second observer to see how six teachers used the coursebook in their classroom and to identify questions for further viewing and for the interview |

| Teacher interview to get more information about the reasons for their use of the material |

| Second video viewing with the second observer to investigate how coursebook tasks were modified replaced and supplemented in the classroom |

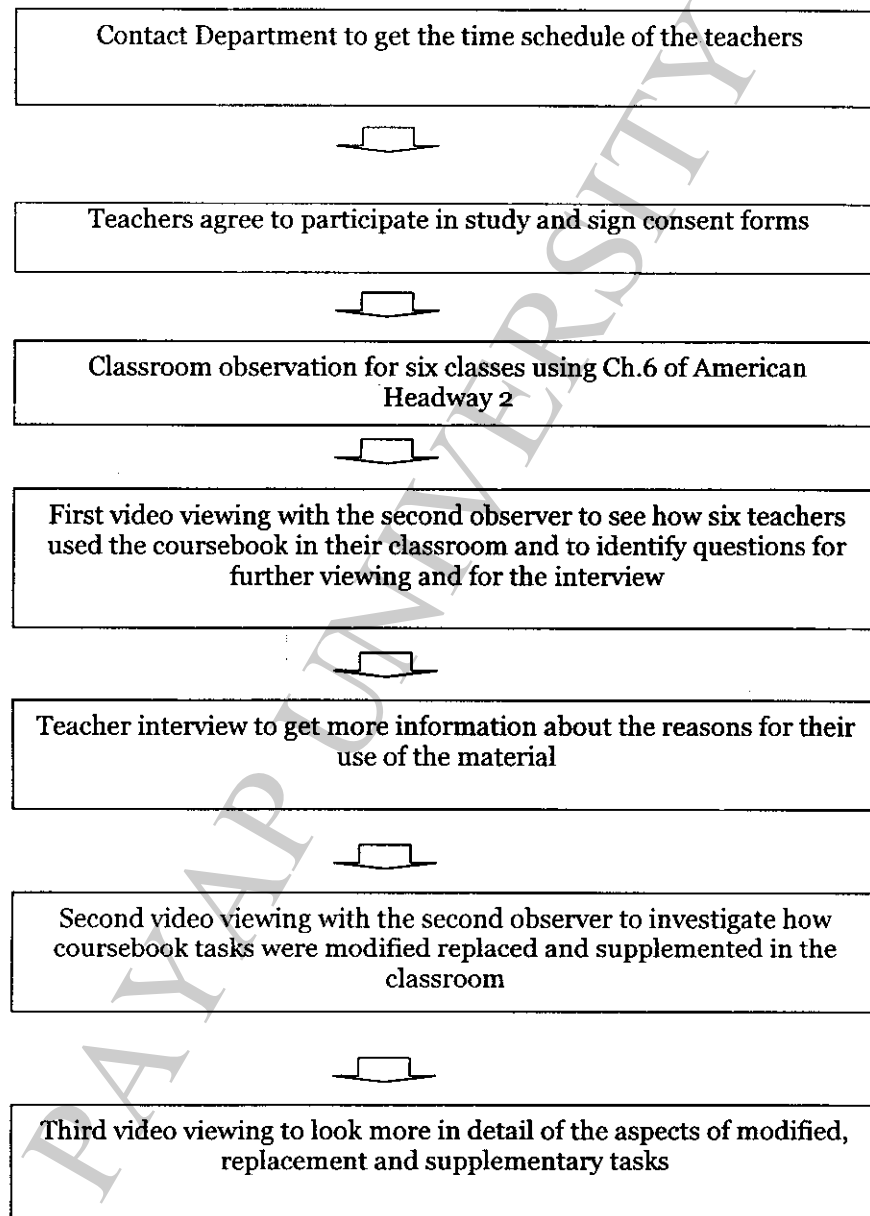| Third video viewing to look more in detail of the aspects of modified, replacement and supplementary tasks |

Figure 1: Overview of research procedure and data collection

From the flow chart, contacting the English department to get the information about date and time available of the teachers, who teach fundamental English, was the first stage. Then, six teachers were selected to be observed and interviewed for collecting data. Ethical consent forms were sent to the six teachers before starting classroom observation. After that, the first video viewing was used to get the information for the interview questions for these six teachers, after which they were interviewed. Further video viewing aimed to get specific information about material adaptation and supplementation. These stages are described in more detail below.

<div align="center">Course and Material</div>

The coursebook used in the course selected for this research was *American Headway 2*. This coursebook is suitable for this research because it is very widely used all around the world, and it provides a variety of activities for teachers and students involving all four language skills. Also, the coursebook, in common with other international coursebooks, is attractive and interesting in appearance, motivating students to learn through the color on each page, more than the average black and white book.

American Headway 2, written by John and Liz Soars, consists of a package of three books: Student's Book, Workbook and Teacher's Book. The coursebook is divided into fourteen units. Each of these is organized as follows:

1. Starter is a short student-centered activity of direct relevance to the language to be introduced in the unit.

2. Presentation has a personalized heading followed by a presentation of language items being studied.

3. Practice provides a wide variety of exercise types, such as matching, gap-fill, survey, role-play, and information-gap activities.

4. Skills Activities for reading, listening, and speaking skills are provided in the student's book. (Writing skill development is provided in the workbook.)

5. Vocabulary relates to the topic of the text. A variety of vocabulary exercise types provides lexical input and encourages good learning habits.

6. Everyday English finishes off the unit and focuses on high-use functional, situational, or social language.

This university course asks students to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, emphasizing English usage for communication in everyday life. All teachers were asked to follow the course objectives. A syllabus was provided for the teachers giving objectives of each unit and offering activities and methodology which can used as an optional choice for the teachers. The course objectives and syllabus are given in Appendix A.

Chapter 6 (beginning on p. 42 of the student's book) was studied in this research. The use of Chapter 6 was selected for this research because the teaching of the unit took place after the midterm examinations, but not immediately before the final examinations. Therefore the teachers should not have had to rush to finish chapter 6 before the final examination. Also, there are a variety of activities in this chapter such as jigsaw activities, gap-fills and

matching activities. These help display the ways in which the teachers used the coursebook.

Chapter 6 consists of sections on grammar about comparative and superlative adjectives and "what...like?". Synonyms and antonyms are in the section of vocabulary and pronunciation. Everyday English section is on the topic of giving directions. The stories about two millionaires, one who was stingy and one who was generous, are in the reading and speaking section. For the listening and speaking part, an interview of the woman who lives in another country is provided for the students. Also, the writing part provided in the workbook is about relative clauses, who/that/which/where, and describing a place. Chapter 6 from the student's book, teacher's book and workbook are given in Appendix B.

Participants

The participants in this research were instructors teaching this fundamental English course. From a total of thirteen teachers teaching this course, six were purposefully selected for observation (Morse & Richards, 2002, p.173) so that the teachers observed reflected the variety of instructors teaching this course, in terms of teaching experience and native language background. The six teachers selected for observation included two Thai teachers who had experience using *American Headway 2* before, and another two Thai teachers who were new teachers and had never experienced using this coursebook. The remaining two teachers were non-Thai. Both had experience of using *American Headway 2*. One was a native English speaker,

the other a non-native English speaker. A further criterion in purposefully

selecting these teachers was time availability. These six teachers had

timetables that enabled the researcher to observe all classes. There were up to

35 students in each class.

Research Instruments

Observations and interviews were used to collect the data as described

below.

Observations

Class observation of the six teachers was carried out to find out how the

teachers used the material when teaching Unit 6. The focus of the observation

was whether the teachers followed the lesson plan in the book or if they

created their own activities, and if so, then what kinds of activities they added.

Video-recordings were made of the classes. The recordings were analyzed as

described later.

Interviews

Following the observations, semi-structured interviews with the

teachers were used to gather information about their reasons for their use of

the coursebook material. Interviews were conducted in English and recorded

for later analysis. Some interview questions were different for each teacher

because the teachers had their own ways that they used the coursebook,

although some of the questions were the same. Teachers were asked why they

selected particular parts for teaching, why they omitted other parts, and why

they made any adaptations. They were also asked what use they made of the

teacher's guide and workbook. Sample questions are given below:

1. Did you use teacher's book as guidance for planning the
    lesson?

2. Which parts of the material did you see as most important
    for your students? Why?

3. Did you use the workbook for activities in the classroom?
    Why (not)?

4. Why did you add (e.g. an additional grammar exercise)?

5. Why did you omit the (e.g. Everyday English) section?

6. Are there any problems or difficulties in using *Headway*
    in your teaching? If so, what?

Appendix D provides the specific questions for each teacher.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is described below.

Observations

During the observation in the classroom, notes were taken by the

researcher to create a record of the progress of the lesson. Sections of the

material that were not used by the teachers were also noted. The classes were also video-recorded. The recordings amounted to a total of 31 hours of class time. Recordings were viewed in full three times and analyzed as described below.

Video Viewing 1

The video recording of the classes were then viewed with a second observer (the thesis supervisor) to make notes on the unfolding of the lesson, the use of sections and omission of sections of the coursebook, and to identify questions for further viewing and for the interviews. Also, the modified, replacement, and supplementary tasks were noted in this viewing.

Video Viewing 2

The second viewing of the recordings focused on the categorization of tasks. The tasks were identified and coded as modification, replacement and supplementary tasks. The data was also analyzed by the second observer making the analysis more reliable. The table below gives the definitions of modified tasks, replacement task, and supplementary tasks with the examples of the activities from the classrooms.

Table 3: Definitions and examples of unmodified tasks, modified tasks,

replacement tasks, and supplementary tasks

	Definition	Example
Unmodified task (UM)	The coursebook task is implemented in a way that largely follows the instructions in the student's book and teacher's guide	As part of the grammar presentation, the teacher elicits some information about three cities mentioned in the book.
Modified task (M)	The coursebook task is recognizably being implemented, but in a way that differs from the implementation intended in the coursebook with instructions typically being partially followed	Teacher's use of the pre-reading vocabulary matching exercise done as a whole class rather than in pairs
Replacement task (R)	Task used in place of an identifiable coursebook task. In contrast to modified tasks, replacement tasks are not described in the materials, although they may involve working with coursebook material.	Teacher's presentation of the target grammar point through explanation of sentences containing information from the class rather than using hypothesis forming based on language from the life of a fictional character in the coursebook.
Supplementary task (S)	Supplementary tasks are not described in the materials, although, they may involve using coursebook content. In contrast to replacement tasks, they are introduced in addition to the tasks in the coursebook, or corresponding replacement tasks.	In the class, learners read in chorus a complete tapescript in addition to identifying adjectives in the text.

<u>Video Viewing 3</u>

The third viewing of the recordings was carried out to analyze the tasks that the teacher used in the classroom according to a framework for task analysis adapted from Littlejohn (1998). This framework asks about what learners do (in terms of turn-taking, focus and mental operations), what patterns of interaction are required and what content the learners work with (in terms of input, output, and the source and nature of the content). The definitions of the task aspects in this framework are given in appendix C. This viewing focused on the tasks in detail following the categories of Littlejohn by analyzing what the learners are expected to do in each aspect of the task.

Using the checklist, the differences between the tasks which teachers modified in the classroom and the tasks described in the coursebook were identified. Replacement tasks were analyzed in the same way and compared with the tasks in the coursebook. Also, supplementary tasks were analyzed in this way to explore whether teachers provide learning experiences that the coursebook did not provide, although with supplementary tasks no comparison was made with coursebook tasks. This process can be illustrated with the following examples:

Example of analysis of a modified task: Teacher A modified a task which required the students to read and answer reading comprehension questions provided in the coursebook individually instead of working in pair (task 16 from Teacher A (appendix F)). Analysis of this task (see appendix F) reveals that for turn-taking students are required to respond (as they are given a reading passage which controls their responses). The focus of the task was

on meaning. The task required learners to decode meaning and select information. For interaction, the task required learners to work individually, simultaneously. For input, it was the form of written extended discourse. For output, it was the form of written words, phrases, sentences, and oral words, phrases, sentences. The source of content was the material (reading passage provided in the coursebook). The nature of the content was non-fiction (the story about two millionaires). Thus compared with the coursebook, the interaction was modified in that students did not work in pairs as the coursebook suggested but worked individually.

Example of analysis of a replacement task: Teacher F introduced a task which required the students to attend to an explanation of comparatives and superlatives with questions asked around the class instead of asked the students to discover the rules by themselves (Teacher F, task 6 (see appendix F)). This can be categorized as a replacement task as the students did not discover the rules of comparatives and superlatives by themselves according to the coursebook. Analysis of this task (see Appendix F) and comparison with the coursebook tasks reveals that it for turn-take both tasks required the students to respond. The focus of the task was on the relationship between meaning and the language system which replaced the language system in the coursebook task. The task required learners to attend to explanation and apply language rule which replaced formulate language rule and retrieve from long term memory in the coursebook task. For interaction, the task required the interaction between teacher and learner(s), with the whole class observing, instead of also including learners working in pairs. Input was the form of written words, phrases, sentences and oral extended discourse as in the

coursebook task. Output was in the form of oral words, phrases, sentences

which replaced oral words, phrases, sentences and written words, phrases,

sentences in the coursebook task. The source was from teacher, not material.

The nature of the content of both in classroom task and coursebook task were

metalinguistic comment and linguistic items.

Example of analysis of a supplementary task: Teacher A introduced a

task which required the students to complete a gap-fill exercise as a pre-test

before studying the unit (Teacher A, task 1 (see Appendix F)). This can be

categorized as a supplementary task as it does not appear in the coursebook,

and does not replace any coursebook task. Analysis of this task (Appendix F)

reveals that it for turn-take it required the students to respond (as they are

given a script). The focus of the task was on the relationship between meaning

and the language system. The task required learners to decode meaning and

apply a language rule. For interaction, the task required learners to work

individually, simultaneously. Both output and input were in the form of

written words, phrases or sentences. The source of content was the teacher

(who prepared the exercise). The nature of the content was linguistic items (in

the form of individual sentences). As there is no equivalent coursebook task,

no comparison with the coursebook is made.

Interviews

The interviews were transcribed for analysis. In the analysis, the

transcripts were color-coded (with a different color for each interviewee), cut

up and then parts of the transcripts were categorized under topic headings

(for example time-pressure and the influence of examinations).

Ethical Considerations

A consent form (Appendix E) and covering letter for the questionnaires

was provided in this research to make clear the terms of understanding

concerning protection of confidentiality. The teacher's names and workplace

are not revealed in any public source in order to make sure that their

confidentiality is maintained.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has presented the research methodology consisting of

research procedure and data collection, course and material, participants,

research instruments, data analysis, ethical considerations. The research

results are provided in the following chapter.