

Original Paper

English Course Resources: Development for Everyday Life and Its Correlation with Students' Pragmatic Competence

Cuilan Zhao¹

¹ Chengdu Polytechnic, Guangyuan, Sichuan, China

Received: January 19, 2025

Accepted: February 17, 2025

Online Published: March 07, 2025

doi:10.22158/eltls.v7n1p86

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/eltls.v7n1p86>

Abstract

This study focuses on the connection between the development of English course resources for everyday life and students' pragmatic competence. By organizing theories related to English course resources, their classification and functions are clarified. The current issues in the development of English course resources for everyday life, in terms of form, content, and updating, are revealed through methods such as questionnaire surveys and case analyses. Through theoretical research and empirical analysis, it is found that the development of English course resources for everyday life significantly enhances students' pragmatic competence.

Keywords

English course resources, development for everyday life, pragmatic competence, teaching reform

Introduction

With the acceleration of globalization, the educational value of English as an important tool for international communication is increasingly highlighted. However, traditional English teaching often falls into the predicament of emphasizing knowledge over application, with students possessing a vast vocabulary and grammar but weak pragmatic competence, making it difficult for them to use English flexibly and effectively in real life. Based on this, the development of English course resources for everyday life has become an important way to promote teaching innovation. The purpose of this study is to deeply analyze the intrinsic connection between the development of English course resources for everyday life and students' pragmatic competence, and to explore effective development strategies. It is hoped that by breaking through existing teaching bottlenecks, the quality of English teaching can be improved, and students can truly master the language, achieving a transition from knowledge learning to competence application.

1. Theoretical Basis

1.1 *Everyday Life Teaching Theory*

Everyday life teaching theory emphasizes the deep integration of education and life, advocating for placing teaching activities in real-life situations. In the field of English teaching, incorporating life elements into the classroom allows students to use English for communication and expression in familiar scenarios, reflecting this theory. From the perspective of cognitive psychology, this approach aligns with the laws of human cognitive development, reducing the difficulty of understanding knowledge and strengthening the effect of knowledge retention. Through everyday life teaching, students can more easily understand abstract English language knowledge and increase their interest and enthusiasm for learning English. It cultivates their ability to use English to solve problems in real life, effectively achieving a transition from "learning English" to "using English."

1.2 *Theories Related to Pragmatic Competence*

Pragmatic competence focuses on the cultivation of the ability of language users to use language efficiently and appropriately in specific contexts for communication. Its core components include the accuracy, appropriateness, and strategic use of language. Students' correct use of grammar and vocabulary is a requirement for accuracy. Language expression should conform to the communicative situation, the interlocutor, and the cultural background, which is what appropriateness emphasizes. Strategic use includes using language skills to achieve communicative goals, such as indirect expressions and explanations. In the process of learning English, the cultivation of pragmatic competence is extremely critical, as it directly relates to whether students can successfully convey information and communicate emotions in cross-cultural communication situations, avoiding communication barriers caused by pragmatic errors.

2. Analysis of the Current Situation and Problems of the Development of English Course Resources for Everyday Life

2.1 *Investigation of the Current Situation of the Development of English Course Resources for Everyday Life*

To accurately grasp the actual situation of the development of English course resources for everyday life, this study comprehensively used methods such as questionnaire surveys, classroom observations, and teacher interviews. The questionnaire survey targeted English teachers and students from schools at different regions and levels, covering multiple dimensions such as the form of resource development, frequency, and the degree of student participation. Classroom observation mainly focused on how teachers incorporate life elements into daily teaching, such as creating teaching situations and using real-life cases. Teacher interviews focused on understanding teachers' understanding, practical experience, and challenges faced in the development for everyday life.

The survey indicates that most teachers have realized the key significance of the development of English course resources for everyday life and have attempted to introduce materials from everyday life

into their teaching. Approximately 70% of teachers indirectly use English advertisements, film and television clips, and other materials to assist in teaching. Some schools actively organize extracurricular practical activities closely related to everyday life, such as English corners and English drama performances. However, overall, the degree of development is uneven, and the differences between regions are significant. Schools in economically developed areas have an advantage in terms of the richness and innovation of resource development, while in some remote areas, the advancement of development for everyday life is slower due to limitations in teaching resources and teachers' concepts.

2.2 Problems Existing in the Development of English Course Resources for Everyday Life

At present, the forms of development of English course resources for everyday life are relatively limited. Many teachers are stuck at the level of displaying everyday life pictures and playing simple videos, lacking in-depth exploration and diversified integration of resources. For example, when using English film and television clips, they are often simply played and then questions are asked, without guiding students to engage in extension activities such as role-playing and plot adaptation. This leads to the teaching value of film and television resources not being fully utilized, and it is difficult to continuously arouse students' interest.

Some everyday resources, when selected, lack in-depth consideration, focusing merely on the superficial fun aspect while neglecting the close connection with teaching objectives. For instance, the real-life cases introduced when explaining English grammar knowledge fail to accurately demonstrate the application of grammatical rules, leading students to be interested in the cases but unable to efficiently understand and master the key points of grammar, making it difficult to achieve the transition of knowledge from real-life scenarios to academic knowledge.

With the rapid development of society, new elements of life and linguistic phenomena continuously emerge. However, the pace of updating English course resources has not kept up with this rhythm. The real-life cases and topics within the textbooks often appear outdated, still revolving around traditional festivals, common professions, etc., with insufficient attention to modern life content such as emerging technology and pop culture, resulting in students being unable to apply the English they have learned to current real-life situations.

Factors affecting the development of everyday English course resources include:

The effectiveness of resource development largely depends on the professional quality of teachers, who are the core subjects. Due to a lack of professional training in course resource development among some teachers and insufficient understanding of the concept of everyday teaching, they find it challenging to select and integrate everyday resources, making it difficult to design high-quality, teaching-needs-aligned everyday teaching plans.

The development of everyday resources is limited by the hardware facilities and resource reserves of schools. The use of rich online resources by teachers is restricted due to outdated multimedia equipment and unstable network access in some schools, leading to an inability to provide students with sufficient everyday reading materials. Additionally, if schools do not allocate enough flexible time

in the curriculum, the implementation of complex everyday teaching activities by teachers will also be hindered.

Given the diverse interests and life backgrounds of students, their acceptance and needs for everyday resources also vary. Some students with weaker foundations find it difficult to use English in complex real-life situations, while those with stronger learning abilities may find existing resources lacking in challenge. If teachers do not fully consider individual differences among students during resource development, it can lead to poor engagement from some students, thereby affecting teaching outcomes. Strategies and methods for the development of everyday English course resources:

1) Everyday teaching content

The foundation for achieving everyday development of English course resources lies in closely connecting teaching content with everyday life. Teachers need to deeply explore the textbooks to find connections with real life, transforming abstract English knowledge into vivid everyday examples. For example, when explaining the grammar of the simple present tense, teachers can relate to students' daily routines and guide them to describe their daily activities, such as "I get up at 7:00 every morning. Then I have breakfast and go to school." Through this method, students not only understand the grammatical concept of the simple present tense expressing habitual and frequent actions but can also naturally apply it in familiar everyday scenarios, enhancing memory and application of grammatical knowledge.

In addition, teachers can incorporate current affairs and social phenomena into teaching materials. For instance, during the study of environmental protection themes, integrating hot topics such as current global climate change and waste sorting policies into the classroom, and arranging discussions and debates for students, such as "Should we completely ban single-use plastics?" This encourages students to use English to express their views on real issues, broadening their horizons and enhancing their ability to analyze and solve practical problems in English, giving English learning a stronger practical significance.

2) Diverse teaching resources

The important support for achieving everyday development of English course resources lies in the integration of diverse teaching resources. In addition to traditional textbooks and teaching references, teachers should reasonably utilize online resources such as online English learning platforms, English film and television websites, and social media. Online English learning platforms offer a wealth of English courses, listening materials, and speaking practice resources, allowing teachers to select suitable resources based on teaching content and student needs and recommend them to students. For example, platforms like "FluentU" and "Daily English Listening" can meet students' learning requirements at different levels.

Community resources are also crucial. Schools can collaborate with surrounding communities to organize projects such as English volunteer activities and community English lectures. For example, students can be involved in community English corner activities to assist community residents with

simple English communication, enhancing their practical English skills. Additionally, inviting community members proficient in English, such as foreign teachers and returnees from abroad, to come to the school and give lectures can enrich students' intercultural knowledge and expand their learning avenues, making English learning no longer confined to the classroom and textbooks.

3) Everyday teaching methods

Using everyday teaching methods can arouse students' enthusiasm for active learning and improve learning outcomes. Task-based teaching methods have prominent advantages in everyday teaching. Teachers can set specific tasks based on everyday scenarios, such as after learning about family relationships, arranging students to draw family trees and introduce family members in English, using learned vocabulary and sentence patterns like "This is my father. He is a doctor. He likes playing basketball." In the process of completing the tasks, students will absorb and apply knowledge to practical expression, thereby enhancing their autonomous learning ability and language proficiency.

4) Improving the development of everyday English course resources

(One) Case Selection and Design

To comprehensively and deeply study the effectiveness of the development of English course resources in enhancing students' pragmatic competence, this study selected two representative schools, one being an urban key middle school (School A) and the other a rural ordinary middle school (School B). From the second-year students of School A, two parallel classes were chosen, designated as the experimental group and the control group. In School B, two classes of the same grade were also selected to conduct the same experiment.

The experiment was set for a semester, with the experimental group receiving teaching methods that involved the development of English course resources towards real-life applications, while the control group continued with the traditional teaching model. In terms of teaching content, the experimental group focused on life-oriented extensions based on the unit themes of the textbook, such as "Healthy Living" and "Travel". For instance, under the theme of "Healthy Living", local fitness activities and healthy eating lectures were introduced into the teaching. In contrast, the control group followed the textbook content for regular instruction.

(Two) Case Implementation Process

In School A's experimental group, teachers made reasonable use of multimedia resources. When teaching the "Travel" unit, teachers played videos of English introductions to local famous tourist attractions, guiding students to discuss the features of the attractions and organizing group collaboration for students to design an English travel guide based on local attractions, including transportation, attraction explanations, and dining recommendations. In class, from vocabulary selection to sentence construction, students actively communicated their ideas in English and continuously attempted to express themselves accurately and appropriately. At the same time, teachers invited local travel agency staff to come into the classroom to share real-life English application scenarios in the tourism industry. Students seized the opportunity to ask questions and communicate in

English, further enhancing their practical application of travel English.

Due to relatively limited teaching resources in School B, teachers focused on exploring local life resources. In the "Healthy Living" unit, students were organized to visit local organic farms, where they recorded the planting process of crops in English and learned about the sources of healthy ingredients. After returning to school, a theme speech activity on "Healthy Food in Our Area" was carried out, where students, based on their visit experiences, explained the types and benefits of local healthy foods in English. In addition, teachers encouraged students to interview local doctors, collect advice on healthy lifestyles, and compile it into an English report. In this process, students overcame shyness in English expression and gradually became confident in communicating and expressing in English.

(Three) Case Effectiveness Analysis

At the end of the semester, a unified English pragmatic competence assessment was conducted for both the experimental and control groups, covering listening comprehension, speaking expression, reading comprehension, and writing. Among these, the speaking expression and writing sections focused on examining students' language application levels in real-life scenarios. The test results showed that the average scores of School A's experimental group students in speaking expression and writing were 8 points and 6 points higher than those of the control group, respectively. School B's experimental group also had average scores in these two areas that were 5 points and 4 points higher than the control group. This indicates that life-oriented teaching is significantly effective in enhancing students' ability to use English in real-life situations.

Through classroom observation, it was noticed that the experimental group students' participation in class was significantly higher. In activities such as group discussions and role-playing, they were more proactive in communicating in English and expressed themselves more naturally and smoothly. Teachers' feedback also indicated that experimental group students were more flexible and versatile in their daily English communication, able to choose appropriate expressions based on different scenarios. However, the control group students relied more on textbook knowledge and appeared quite awkward when applying English in real-life situations.

A questionnaire survey of students showed that over 80% of the experimental group students indicated that life-oriented teaching significantly increased their interest in learning English and felt that their ability to use English in real life had improved. For example, a student from School A reported that during the process of designing a travel guide, they learned how to accurately describe routes and recommend attractions in English. During a family outing, they were able to confidently communicate with foreign tourists in English. A student from School B mentioned that after completing interviews and reports on the healthy living theme, they could introduce healthy lifestyles to family and friends in English, making English learning feel more meaningful.

5. The Correlation Mechanism Between the Development of English Curriculum Resources Towards Life Orientation and Students' Pragmatic Competence

5.1 Theoretical Analysis of Correlation

The Situated Cognition Theory emphasizes that learning is a process in which individuals build knowledge through interaction in real-life scenarios. The development of English curriculum resources towards life orientation creates language learning environments that are close to reality for students. In life-oriented scenarios, the English that students encounter is not isolated vocabulary and grammatical rules but practical expressions closely related to specific life situations. For example, learning shopping-related English in a simulated shopping scenario, students can not only remember phrases like "Can I have a discount?" "I'm looking for..." but also understand when and how to use them in actual shopping communication. This allows the knowledge learned to be effectively associated with life practice, promoting the improvement of pragmatic competence. Such contextualized learning is beneficial for students to build up a rich repertoire of language use in their minds, enabling them to quickly retrieve and apply appropriate language to communicate when encountering similar life situations.

According to Constructivist Learning Theory, learners actively construct knowledge based on their existing experiences. The development of English curriculum resources towards life orientation aligns with this theory because life is a key source of experience for students. When students learn English in familiar life scenarios, they can integrate new knowledge with their existing life cognition. For example, when learning the theme of "Healthy Living," students rely on their understanding of their own healthy lifestyles, such as daily exercise and dietary habits, to more easily understand and master relevant English expressions like "do regular exercise" and "a balanced diet." At the same time, by participating in life-oriented learning activities, such as discussing healthy living habits and developing personal health plans, students continuously process and recombine knowledge, deepening their understanding and application of the language. Thus, pragmatic competence is enhanced, achieving the transformation from knowledge input to effective output.

5.2 Analysis of Empirical Research Results

Through in-depth analysis of multiple sets of experimental data from the previous cases, the connection between the development of English curriculum resources towards life orientation and students' pragmatic competence is further highlighted. In terms of language test scores, the experimental groups from School A and School B scored significantly higher than the control group in oral expression and writing tests, which focused on pragmatic competence. This directly indicates that after a semester of life-oriented teaching, students' ability to use English in real-life situations has significantly improved. In oral expression tests, students in the experimental group could more confidently use a rich vocabulary and diverse sentence structures to describe life experiences and express opinions. In writing tests, their articles were more relevant to real life, and their language use was more flexible and accurate.

Qualitative research results such as classroom observations and student questionnaires also strongly support the connection between the two. According to classroom observations, students in the

experimental group showed greater enthusiasm for participation and language use in life-oriented teaching activities such as group discussions and role-playing. They could communicate in English more naturally, and at the same time, the language error rate decreased, and communication effectiveness was significantly improved. According to the feedback from student questionnaires, most students in the experimental group indicated that life-oriented teaching had greatly increased their interest in learning English. They were more inclined to actively use English in daily life.

5.3 Discussion on Factors Affecting the Correlation Effect

5.3.1 Teacher Factors

Teachers are the core implementers of the development of English curriculum resources towards life orientation. The correlation effect is directly influenced by the depth of teachers' understanding of life-oriented teaching concepts and their execution capabilities. If teachers can accurately identify the connection points between teaching materials and life and design life-oriented teaching activities, such as cleverly introducing real-life examples and creating realistic life scenarios, they can effectively guide students in improving their pragmatic competence in practice. On the contrary, if teachers do not fully understand life-oriented teaching and teaching activity design remains at a superficial level, students will find it difficult to truly benefit from life-oriented resources and improve their pragmatic competence.

5.3.2 Student Factors

Students' learning attitudes, existing knowledge base, and learning abilities also affect the combination effect. If students hold a positive and proactive learning attitude, they will fully participate in life-oriented learning activities, actively explore and use English, thereby more effectively enhancing their language use abilities. Students with a solid knowledge foundation are more likely to achieve knowledge transfer when faced with life-oriented English learning content, quickly understand and apply new language knowledge. For students with stronger learning abilities, they can adapt more quickly to life-oriented learning models and flexibly use English to deal with problems in complex life scenarios. Students with relatively weaker learning abilities may need more guidance and support; otherwise, they may find it difficult in life-oriented learning, which could affect the improvement of their language use abilities.

5.5.3 Resource Factors

The quality and applicability of life-oriented resources are also crucial. High-quality, rich, and highly aligned with teaching goals resources, such as vivid life videos, authentic English advertisements, and reading materials close to students' lives, can fully engage students' interest in learning and provide them with abundant language input. On the contrary, if the quality of resources is poor, the content is outdated, and does not match teaching goals, they will not only fail to attract students but may also hinder their learning and reduce the positive effectiveness of the development of English curriculum resources towards life orientation in improving students' pragmatic competence.

Conclusion

This study has deeply explored the connection between the lifelike development of English course resources and students' pragmatic competence, not only clarifying the classification of course resources but also revealing the existing problems and proposing effective development strategies. Whether from a theoretical or empirical perspective, lifelike development can significantly enhance students' pragmatic competence. However, this study has certain limitations, such as insufficiently broad sample coverage and relatively short research periods. Future research needs to expand the sample size to include more regions and educational stages, and extend the research period to track long-term effects.

References

- Gao, J. (2014). In An Empirical Study on the Application of Pragmatic Inference Strategies in College English Listening Teaching (Vol. 2). Diss. Chongqing Normal University.
- Jin, L. N. (2021). *A Study on the Current Situation and Countermeasures of English Pragmatic Competence of Senior High School Students* (Doctoral dissertation, Yanbian University).
- Liu, M. L. (2024). *Research on the Integration Path of Primary School Chinese Reading and Writing under Relevance Theory*. Basic Education Forum.
- Lu, H. (2014). A Study on the Correlation between the English Foreign Newspaper and Periodical Curriculum Model and the Self-learning Ability of Higher Vocational Students. *Journal of Liaoning Economic Vocational Technology College*.
- Yuan, J. R., Yao, M. X., & Tian, Y. C. (2023). A Study on the Correlation between English Phonological Output Anxiety and Oral Ability of English Minor Students. *Modern Linguistics*, 11(3), 12. <https://doi.org/10.12677/ML.2023.113130>