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Synergy of Education and Entertainment as an Advance Approach for Second Language Learning

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ABSTRACT

The idea of amalgamation of education and entertainment can be widely seen over the last few decades. Currently, two commonly known terms when referring to combining education and entertainment are “learning through play” and “edutainment”. The objective of this paper is to present an investigation into the use of edutainment to enhance the second language learning at primary level. Engagement and motivation has always been a challenging task when working with students learning a second or foreign language. Edutainment is very helpful at primary level, because it relates the abstract things to the concrete which helps primary level children to experience instead of imagining the concept. Also it offers a powerful format for educational environment that are attractive and motivating. The appropriate use of edutainment in learning relies upon its inclusion in curriculum, teaching methods, methods of assessment etc. To impart learning best through edutainment, teachers are also required to be competent and to bring competency, pre- service and in-service teacher training programs should be held.

Keywords: Edutainment, Second language learning, English, Education

Introduction

Education is viewed as a process by which an individual acquire knowledge, insight, values, skills, and habits. The process continues throughout life because man always works in the society with the help of various skills and communication, and communication is carried by means of language.

In India, English is enjoying the place of second language and holding a place of prestige. Medium of university and higher education in quite a number of states is English. Therefore, a firm base of English proficiency in students at primary level is essential for ensuring successful higher education in terms of job placement.

In the ongoing education system of teaching learning process at primary level, the use of conventional teaching aids i.e. chalk- blackboard, charts, indoor and outdoor games has many limitation in creating interest among students for learning second language. Also, if we talk about the second language learning (English), effective acquisition cannot take place with these less effective methods. Because while learning foreign language, one is surrounded by the mother tongue and this is likely to interfere with the learning of the language. One need to remove these traditional methods to make the student skilled in English language .A remedy to this problem is inclusion of edutainment to make the teaching learning process effective and interesting for the students.

Objectives

- ✓ To define the meaning of edutainment.
- ✓ To define the concept of second language and its learning (English).
- ✓ Use edutainment for second language (English) teaching at primary level.

Edutainment –Meaning

Edutainment is a unique way of teaching which weave education and entertainment together to impart knowledge. **Edutainment** consist of two words **education** and **edutainment**. Generally, edutainment seeks to transmit knowledge in the form of some familiar form of entertainment: films, music, video games, television programs, websites, animation, multimedia software etc. Edutainment is not always about integrating technology to education, but it can also take place when students are visiting zoo, roaming around nature, playing in playground or similar situation where students are not only getting information but enjoying the sights too. The basic concept of edutainment is not new to the world of education, as it has been coined in the early 1990s.

Children's book in early 19th century were the main examples of edutainment, where readers being amused by the colorful pictures which were used to teach them alphabets and letters. "*Sesame Street*" and "*The Wonderful World of Disney*" can be quoted as just two early examples of edutainment.

It helps in building virtual environment for multiple interactions. Due to virtual experiences learners' mental association changes permanently. "The Edger Dales cone of experiences" also shows direct purposeful experiences as effective tool of teaching that is possible in the **edutainment**. It gives "procedural knowledge dimension" to the learner that is related to the specific skills, algorithm and techniques and even to decide appropriate procedures. The other advantage of edutainment covers the possibility of distributed learning process.

Pedagogy involved with Edutainment includes:

- **Relevance:** When the learner see the usefulness of knowledge they are given, they are more likely to learn the things rapidly.
- **Incremental Learning:** every learner is unique, hence learn at own pace. Edutainment facilitate individual to learn at their own pace.
- **Distributed Learning:** existence of individual differences makes different individual learn in different ways over different periods of time. If the learning experience is present differently, chances are more that people integrate the imparted knowledge.

This clearly reflects that how edutainment activities work and how it makes the learning easy. Edutainment is a form of teaching that stimulates students mind by combining entertainment with the teaching methods and strategies. Various forms of edutainment are popular, among them television is a familiar one. With many educational shows around the world, television is imparting knowledge in the form of edutainment for many years. Along with television, games and simulations are another great form of edutainment that can create situational learning experiences for better effective learning. Another technique used in the form of edutainment is situational learning activity, which is a great way to inspire students to be interactive with the subject. These activities also help in lighten up the burden of study schedule by incorporating entertainment. Situational learning activities provide an environment where students give a healthy diet of entertainment to their brain as well as learn in speedy way. It helps the students in letting them fully involved in the learning activities.

Edutainment provides many different ways of learning a subject most suited to the students as every student is unique and learn at different pace and in a unique way. Edutainment excite the student about the subject learning in best possible way, so that the learning becomes long lasting for the students.

English (as a second language) and its learning

According to **Cambridge Dictionary** "it is a language that a person can speak but which is not the language they learnt naturally at their home." In another words, it is any language that a person learns after mother tongue or first language.

In India English is enjoying the status of a compulsory second language. It is compulsory at all three levels of education from primary to university level. It is quite necessary to build a strong base of education at primary level as it has a foundation of higher level.

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), U.S., explains proficiency of English language in the way that a fully proficient student in English language is able to use English, to ask question, to understand content taught in the class, to read material and to write what is being asked. To achieve these four languages skills, contribute to its proficiency which are as follows:

1. **Reading** - the ability to comprehend and elucidate text correctly as expected at that level and age.
2. **Listening** - The ability to perceive the language and instruction of the instructor correctly, apprehend and take out given information, as well follow the instructions and act accordingly.
3. **Writing** - the ability to write text with content and format for fulfilling classroom assignments at the appropriate age and grade level.
4. **Speaking** - the ability to speak language properly and effectively in activities (peer tutoring, collaborative learning, and other sessions of question and answer) within the classroom and in other interactions.

Modern scientific investigations have shown that man has specific brain centers which are active in the use of linguistic form. Two of these centers receive impression from organs of senses, the eye and ear (sensory), and two centers give out impulses to the motor nerves of the hand and the vocal organ (motor). In acquiring new linguistic forms these centers may be employed in succession, or two or more simultaneously, while in some cases one or more of the centers are not used at all. The scheme of the associations into which words enter or constructed by Wundt shows that the best method of inculcating linguistic forms is to make the first appeal to the ear, to be followed by imitating speaking exercise. In the process of second language learning the **laws of use** (exercise) and **disuse (Thorndike)** would be evident in learning to speak it and constant practice and repetition would be necessary to form the habits and reflexes necessary for speech.

Use of edutainment in second language learning (English) at primary level

The students in India can be divided in two main categories- the one is having the regional language as medium of instruction and the other is having English as the medium of instruction at their primary level of education. Therefore, the problem related to teaching of English language as a second

language, to the Indian students starts at primary level. So, it's quite necessary to pay attention toward primary level learning. As children start their studies at this stage so they are not aware of any subject in their school specially a second language which they usually not hear at home.

As we know that English language is like a window through which we can look at the whole world. It shows how important is English language for us. But learning of English as second language is not an easy task for teachers and students both at the primary level. While learning second language we encounter with a new culture, new way of thinking, feeling and acting which affect an individual as a whole. To communicate properly in a second language we need total commitment, involvement, physical, intellectual and emotional response. To fulfill these conditions a language teacher may use edutainment at this level. It helps the learners to connect with the knowledge, key concepts, fact, and processes in a way that is full of fun and exciting for them. By using edutainment programs, a learner constructs meaning and discovers things about a subject area in a more personal way.

For developing competency in English language, it is required to develop proficiency in four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). To achieve this objective, edutainment can be used as one of the most powerful ways for engaging the user in a learning environment. The main objective of this approach is to achieve the imaginative engagement of the learner. Simulated environment during the edutainment experiences may help a learner to acquire skills and knowledge. The form of the user activity is modified as per the domain and the learning approach adapted in the edutainment program. Role play and dramatization can be used as a technique to acquire skills. Also, games can be used as the best edutainment technique. It allows the learners to simulate real life situations, drama or narrative thereby supporting their fluency communicative competence.

Edutainment is more effective than a traditional and passive education program. Edutainment supports observation, exploration as they are tasked based activity. Edutainment programmers actually place the users into the program for full experience activities which helps learner in acquiring language skills but in a passive education program the learner simply observes the operation of a simulated system. Once you have achieved the level of situational learning experience you have then achieved a major milestone.

Many interactive programs can be used which let the students to be a part of the activities. By being interactive with the knowledge, we can retain and remember knowledge more accurately

As a source of edutainment, a teacher can use audio and video tapes. While using audio tape or recorder a teacher may add some activities in it like listen and say or listen and write. If teachers use video tape or television, then he/she may ask students to see and write or see and speak. In this way a teacher can enhance the four skills with fun and students' participation. Likewise, these edutainment activities teachers can use pictures and models for developing language competency by adding further activities in it, like see picture/model and speak about it or read it. Other sources for edutainment can be computer games, television and mobile. Through this way children will learn English with fun and entertainment at primary level because these activities can impart skills without making the environment monotonous.

Linguistic Utility

Numerous methods are used to enhance the learning and interest of student while teaching foreign language to the children and adolescents, music is one of them. By studying the music of the any language, we become familiar with its pronunciation, intonation, stress, accent, pitch, tone, melody, rhyme, rhythm and fluency. Music and language share these linguistic and communicative structures, and "the consistent mapping of musical and linguistic structure may enhance the process of learning system" (Schon et al, 2008). Repetition of learning experiences help in language learning and its fluency, in this respect music too helps in acceleration of language learning through lyrical repetition. During repetitive format and use of chorus in songs, learners are exposed to syntax, lexical items etc. which help in self-regulatory learning of language (Abbott, 2002). Repetitive use of music also enables students to remember phrases of the targeted languages.

When learning material is presented with the help of music in the form of songs, it may seem easy for some learners while difficult for many low-level learners. So, it is recommended that learners should have full knowledge of music and lyrical speeds, easy and difficult vocabulary, variety of composition lengths etc. it is because they are quite familiar with real life situations. If such knowledge is attained by the learners, they will be able to notice authentic differences in the music and language.

Imagination and Inspiration

Audio visual materials provide an interactive platform for learners. Short videos can be considered as good example for teaching stories and short plays. Also, audio visual aids create interest among learners as well as save time by explaining in an easy and precise manner. Effective learning takes place in a natural environment, and in best possible way, audio visual aids creates that necessary environment. Use of audio-visual aids in teaching includes the principle of concrete to abstract which enhance the imagination of learners even in other language too. "The more connections we make with students' past experiences, the more successful the learning experience will be". (Clovis, 1997: 39). So, if students view similar life struggles and experiences in the foreign language, they may be more willing to accept that language and culture.

Effective use of audio-visual aids helps in eliminating monotonous environment of the class by stimulating thinking process of students. This helps the students in developing personal understanding of the areas of learning when they experience an impactful learning environment in the class. Educationists have always insisted, in order to make learning of second language more successful, teacher must create the real environment in the classroom. In this aspect, audio visual aids work as effective tool as they allow teacher to show the culture, the habits, and body language of the targeted language. All this makes the students more comfortable with the alien language as well as make them understand the real purpose of the teaching of that language.

It is relevant to mention that audio visual aid creates harmony between the learners and the instruction methods and material used. In classrooms, teacher has to face wide variety of learners, few of them learn better through visual aids only and few may want combination of audio and video both. If the learner feels comfortable with the methodology and the aid, they are more likely to perform well, feel confident and experience low stress. Videos are the prime example which helps students becoming confident about the language learning as they imitate the real models shown in the video. Therefore, students become more participative, interactive and motivated to learn second language.

Conclusion

So, I would like to conclude that edutainment is a best way to impart English language with the help of entertainment-based activity and full participation of students that makes the learning long lasting. This does not mean teachers should act like comedians in the class performing magic tricks to keep the students entertained while they sit in your class.

Edutainment is very helpful at primary level, because it relates the abstract things to the concrete which helps primary level children to experience instead of imagining the concept. Also, it offers a powerful format for educational environment that are attractive and motivating.

A challenge in designing edutainment material is to keep balance between education and entertainment. The main is to prepare an education material that is neither too entertaining nor too laborious. Learning material should be completely separated from the game playing so that a user can go through the game without noticing the represented information contents completely. This is important to achieve real aim of learning.

Suggestions

- Pre-service and In-service training for edutainment should be provided to the teachers so that they would be aware of its concept.
- Curriculum design should support edutainment activities.
- Seminar, workshops should be held for the teachers timely to introduce the new techniques of edutainment.
- Software's should be developed on edutainment activities.

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