

# Entertainment Technology to Promote Language Learning: Design and Implementation

Sun Zhong<sup>1</sup>, ZHANG JiQiong<sup>2</sup>, Wu Minhua<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>College of Information Engineering, Capital Normal University,  
sunzhong@gmail.com

**Abstract:** *Online entertainment activities and resources offer great potential for English learning as second language(ESLL). This paper explored the impact of online entertainment resources and activities on ESLL for college students in China. The research conducted with three studies. In study one, current level and situation of online ESLL learning were investigated, then in study two, a special edutainment ESLL Intranet site was developed and followed by a series of ESLL activities by Peer Assistant Learning in study three. The results showed that online edutainment had positive effects on the learning strategies on ESLL optimize the online life style and guarantee the quality of entertainment English learning.*

**Keywords:** *entertainment, English as second language learning, university English, network way of life*

## 1. Introduction

It had been the wordless pain that most of Chinese undergraduate still struggled in the situation named as HSCL (High Score in test but Low Competence in reality) even in the informational technology era. There are a plenty of reforms or experiments based on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for better ESLL outcomes during past several decades. The College English reform launched by Ministry of Education in China, whose objectives were to improve the learning of English through the use of ICT (Ling Hu al.etc, 2009, Zhiwen Hu& Ian McGrath, 2011). Guided by the national tendency, many experiments were conducted in classroom by teachers and researchers on reading, listening, writing and speaking for undergraduate in China. (Ling Hu, 2009, Zhiwen Hu, 2009, Shen, 2011). But the formal English teaching didn't meet the expectation of teachers and students due to the conflict between the deep-rooted teacher-centered pedagogy in the educational system (Ling Hu al.etc, 2009), insufficient ICT facilities, teachers' limited ICT skills, lack of effective communication networks and inadequate technical support and ICT-related training ( Zhiwen Hu & Ian McGrath, 2011).

Actually, it is never a problem for the college students to use ICT by themselves. It was reported that the percentage of personal computer ownership among students in universities in China was only 26% in 2004, and then increased compelling to 47.7% on laptop and 34.7% on desktop till 2008, which is higher in universities located in developed cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, etc. Therefore, it is reasonable that surfing online had already become one of the most major entertainment life styles in undergraduate (Chinese undergraduate research project, 2004, 2008). At the same time, There are various open English learning websites with tons of English learning resources for the public to use free sponsored by kinds of commercial companies and NPO. So edutainment by students themselves could be a remedy even a new road for the formal classroom teaching and learning.

## 2. Edutainment

In fact, Edutainment is not a brand new concept. Robert M Gagne ranked it as the first step in his instructional design theory which is expressed as attract attention. (Gagne, 1974). Edutainment is a hybrid genre that relies heavily on visual material, on narrative or game-like formats, and on more informal, less didactic styles of address. (Buckinham D & Scanlon M, 2000, Poushali Chatterjee 2010, Zhu al.et 2004).The purpose of online edutainment is to attract and hold the attention of the learners by engaging their emotions through a computer monitor full of vividly colored animations because technical advancements in digital multimedia delivery hold huge potential for second language learners. There is generally strong technical and user support for the fundamental notion of building language enhancements around mainstream entertainment (Bird 2004, Okan, Zuhail, 2003).Furthermore, current learners who Beck and Wade (2004) identify as the Gamer Generation, and who Prensky (2006) calls Digital Natives naturally crave engagement and become quickly frustrated when they do not receive it. Fun is regarded as a factor that will be given the learner in shaping his or her own learning goals, as well as the interaction of the learner with his or her own learning goals, as well as the interaction of the learner with his or her peers, who will challenge provide feedback, and aid in developing the learner' s understanding (Watson, 2007) .

### **3. Research Procedure**

Firstly, general attitude and current situation for online edutainment were investigated among 150 undergraduate from a university in Beijing. Based on the results of investigation, a special supportive edutainment Intranet for ESLL was architected named as Entertainment and Enjoy English (nicked name as 3E website), which assembling appropriate and popular types of entertainment English resources. Such as bilingual titled movies, TV series, songs, cartoon, MTVs, jokes.etc. Finally, 32 voluntary undergraduate from study one were involved in a quasi-Peer Assisted Learning with 3E website.

#### ***3.1. Entertainment English learning present situation investigation and analysis***

The first stage is starting in 2009May. Survey for the line 06,07 grade150 students. Chose is being in the sophomore and junior school students as the subjects, because they are for university life, Internet use is very familiar with, so it has stronger representative. The topic of opening questions mainly about the network's basic situation and entertainment network status. Survey instrument using independent research and development network questionnaire version, support for150 subjects, at the same time online and data statistics. Statistical results indicate that:

①Most people spend 2-4hours on the Internet every day the most common Internet activity is chatting and browse news and entertainment, accounted for62% and52%, using a network to undertake formal learning can account for up to27%, but the activity content description, for the majority of job submission or file transfer learning management or business activity.

②The person of 72% thinks the network learning advantages of flexible learning time, because on the network learning environment advantage show higher degree of recognition, 68% people think the advantage of saving the cost and being rich in natural resources. But during using the Internet for formal study, 68% subjects suggest that the major difficulty is difficult to resist the temptation of network entertainment games, which can not be completed as planned formal learning, namely the face of network entertainment low self-control.

③The highest frequency of the three reason is that "in order to find a good job"," in order to pass the fourth band exam or test"," no way because English is a required course", which accounted for55%,48% and39% in total answers ( can choose more than one answer ), and write " like this language answer accounted for only 18% .".

④19% students learning strategies" under the class read English newspapers and magazines or fiction", 23% of the students" listening to the radio or news", and more than half of the students (56%) class only" back word". Only 19% of the students will develop the outside of the classroom learning program, only 5% of the students will communicate with other people in English learning method.

⑤“Do you use the Internet for free English entertainment website? Comments and evaluation",68% of the respondents gave an affirmative answer, their views focus on open English Entertainment learning resources are very rich, resource quality is also good, but either for college students English competence targeted is not strong, either update time is not fixed, or link instability, it is difficult to continue to obtain high quality target resources. We cannot continuously long time using; finally we have to give up.

The first stage of the investigation is over, a preliminary conclusion is :(1) Entertainment network learning environment can be accepted by college students; (2) The college students for formal learning English learning motivation and the lack of interest in learning, and for formal learning self-control is not strong, fun English learning can become formal learning effective remedy; (3) College students' English learning strategy is not ideal, it is necessary to through specific activities to improve their second language learning strategies, so as to promote their English ability in the development of life; (4) Most of the English learning motivation of instrumental motivation, i.e. Is not by intrinsic motivation, but forced by external environment. College Students' English learning motivation to stay pass the exam oriented, short-sighted, English proficiency and English examinations in opposition to each other, so it is necessary to make the students to experience the learning mode in network era, learn to use high-quality cyber source, change their ideas, make lifelong learning happy and become the Web lifestyle characteristics.

According to the above analysis identified second phases of the study content, namely the development of one ,which can let students achieve entertainment English learning web site and in the original network entertainment activities, increasing the proportion of entertainment English learning activities, improving English learning strategies,. Thus make then realize the spontaneous, interesting, and persistent in learning English.

### ***3.2. English learning resources of the entertainment website design and development***

The second stage is from November 2009 to May 2010. According to the questionnaire after the first phase of this study support the entertainment of the English resource site designed and developed. The reason why there is no direct English learning site of the existing entertainment, for two main reasons. First, the existing site updated from time to time, link instability, the pertinence of mixed quality; college students online is to pay in accordance with the flow, if direct access to the external network, a large number of browse the web video or the use of musical resources, or bring them a certain amount of economic pressure. If this is the website of independent research and development, one can use the teachers online account to track multiple excellent English free website bulk download free English language learning and entertainment resources, after secondary subtotals by background batch posted on this site, content a stable source of regularly updated; to all students without any economic burden, free to use.

As the guiding ideology of the site is to create an informal learning environment for students, students in a relaxed and entertaining atmosphere for English learning, coupled with the site and easier for the TV drama, music, stories, jokes and other entertainment resources, the site is named Entertainment & Enjoy English (hereinafter referred to as the 3E). Initial choice of more than twenty-one English language learning website, download the excellent entertainment in English learning resources on a regular basis, classified summary released to the 3E website. These sites include bilingual subtitles and television drama, everyone hearing (Originally in), English courses for college life experience

and knowledge of the difficulty of ([www.speak2me.cn](http://www.speak2me.cn)), as well as authentic American pronunciation listening network (<http://www.manythings.org/>) and so on. 3E website is based on NET technology framework, the resource is divided into the hearing, bilingual movies, classic American drama, famous speeches, cartoons, jokes, songs and MTV and a few forum. To enable students to entertainment and learning and formal learning integration, mutual promotion and site set in a unique learning area is four, six exercise test area.

### 3.3. *Quasi-virtual learning partner*

Learning resources is not enough, in order to promote the effect of entertainment learning English from September 2011 to November to enter the third stage: the "quasi-virtual learning partner" activities. The study subjects were 09, 32 undergraduate students participated in this study. The comparison group followed the original classroom learning, text reading and exercises to practice formal English learning, the experimental group of 16 people, promising to adhere to at least five days a week, at least 15 minutes a day using the 3E site entertainment learning English They can customize the learning content, learning pace, learning long, and with the quasi-virtual learning partners to help each other and reminders. Partners to learn the way, is to establish a mutual supervision, and encourage each other, share information and experience an environment to facilitate students' learning strategies. Asserted that the subject of virtual learning partners, because the learning partners know, but in order to better 3E English, they can not only take face to face communication and help, you can also use the Internet, telephone, SMS etc. information on ways to communicate with each other and encourage. Partners urge each other, encourage each other, share information, share experiences, and signed to study the Undertaking and Deed book .In the third stage after the end, mainly for the following results analysis:

- ①For the experimental group and comparison group, the Oxford Language Learning Strategies Scale pretest and posttest.
- ②For the experiment group 3E learn English entertainment activities, and the record of the content of table.
- ③Open-ended questionnaire for the experimental group, and select learning strategies change more obvious students for individual interviews.

In order to understand the impact of the 3E activities For the college students language learning strategies and the promotion of the role of, and the third phase adopt the Oxford language to learning strategies Scale (Strategy the Inventory for Language Learning, referred to as the SILL) [10] carried out the pre - test and the post - test. Oxford Language Strategies Inventory is based on her own proposed language learning strategy classification system, based on measuring the frequency of subjects in different learning strategies. That the scale after several rounds of to modify has become the standard Scale of the very influential measurement on the in the international language learning strategies of the. Oxford language learning strategies into memory, cognitive, compensation, met cognitive, affective and social strategies. Each strategy scores were divided into three different levels, high (average score of 3.5-4.5 points) represents the frequent use of the strategy (an average score of 3.4-2.5 points) representatives sometimes use low (average score 2.4-0 points) on behalf of rarely used or never used the strategy. The score for each strategy is more, on behalf of such strategies as possible. Six strategies can get a high score, language learning strategies regarding the use of a relatively complete.

Table 1. Two group of before and after the second language learning strategies the score of the original data and grade change

| Policy classes | Memory | Cognition | Compensation | Meta cognition | Emotion | Social contact | Total score |
|----------------|--------|-----------|--------------|----------------|---------|----------------|-------------|
|                |        |           |              |                |         |                |             |

|  |              |              |                 |              |              |              |     |
|--|--------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----|
| Pretest (comparison group)                                     | 2.2          | 2.5          | 3               | 2.3          | 2.3          | 2.4          | 4.7 |
| Pretest (test group)   | 2.1          | 2.4          | 3               | 2.4          | 2.2          | 2.5          | 4.6 |
| Post-test (comparison group)                                   | 2.2          | 2.5          | 3               | 2.3          | 2.3          | 2.4          | 4.7 |
| Post-test (test group)   | 2.7          | 2.8          | 3.4             | 2.7          | 2.8          | 2.8          | 7.2 |
| After the measurement display learning strategies level change | Low → medium | Low → medium | medium → medium | Low → medium | Low → medium | Low → medium |     |

Score results of the measurements from the two groups before and after the second language strategy point of view, the experimental group learning of English through entertainment, there are five strategies to improve the grade, all low-grade elevated to the grade in the compensation strategy from the original rating close to a high level. This increase has a significant difference? Pretest and posttest paired samples T-test results of the two groups, statistical tools for SPSS for the windows 13.0 results shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Two groups before and after the second language learning strategies the score matching T test sample

|   | M   | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |         | t     | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|---|-----|----------------|-----------------|---|---------|-------|----|-----------------|
|   |     |                |                 | Lower                                     | Upper   |       |    |                 |
| Contrast group pre-test --The test group pre-test   | .0  | .09            | .0401           | -.08651                                   | .11985  | .4    | 5  | .695            |
| Contrast group post-test --The test group post-test | -.4 | .07            | .0307           | -.49567                                   | -.33767 | 13.55 | 8  | .000            |

From Table 2, it is known that the two groups on the test data of the company before probability  $p = 0.695 > 0.005$ , so there's no significant difference that first two group of test in the second language learning strategies at the same level. And in the measurement of the sample in matching T test, concomitant probability  $p = 0 < 0.005$ , it has statistical significance on the significant difference.

Again the before and after their strategy score the match after T test samples, and the results showed that also has significant difference ( $M = 4.3333$ ,  $SD = 0.1366$ ,  $p = 0.001 < 0.005$ ), this shows that more entertaining for learning the second language learning strategy has a significant positive effects.

From the study of the entertainment activities record to see, 3 E English activities are the students during free time, such as a lunch break or evening or weekend. The Internet from long to see, 71.4% of subjects were not increase total duration on the Internet, or to maintain in 2-4 hours, but already put pure entertainment to have purpose of English learning activities of entertainment, that is a total duration is not changed, the content of network entertainment that change.

From the opening of the questionnaire, it is known that the experimental group subjects of study of network

entertainment activities high approval, the completely dependent on his interest and self-consciousness and learning partners to promote the informal learning that makes them feel "was responsible for myself", "fresh and interesting way", "the mood is very happy". Especially recognition study partner, 71% of the students think entertainment for English learning activities of learning is very helpful.

## **4. Discussion**

### ***4.1. The English learning activities can entertainment optimization second language learning strategies.***

Recreation turn to English learning a second language learning strategy to get more than a certain degree of improvement and for students' English ability the enhancement created the possibility. And this is not just a test of the ability, it is more likely to reflect in the English learners improve the lifelong learning ability, after a little more precious.

Among them are more obvious is ascension and cognitive strategies. Memory strategy relies mainly on the knowledge content of the storage and extraction. According to Barbara Sealund [11] point of view, the head emotional central help the brain better memory relaxed happy situation, entertainment of a learning process that knowledge representation of the content and situation are shirt-sleeve, thus to appear in the situation of English vocabulary, grammar, expressing extraction also more efficient and long.

Other learning strategies of English learning for entertainment and improve. For example met cognitive strategies required students to focus on one's own study, eager to speak to listen carefully before; To set clear goals for learning, and to have a general to self-motivation and self evaluation. To make the learners learn to recreation turn maintain concentration interest, active participation in, together with and formal English learning goals of direct relevance, so they can consciously self motivation. Emotional strategy requires students to reduce their own learning anxiety, and recreation turn of the learning process naturally reduces their learning anxiety.

### ***4.2. Entertainment can enhance the quality and level of network entertainment.***

With the students before the regular type of aimless entertainment, 3E, English language activities from the outset, clearly inform students, the purpose of this activity is to promote formal learning of English entertainment. Students in online entertainment, with a clear purpose, coupled with the activities gave the students a lot of autonomy, including the choice of entertainment and learning resources, choose the learning period and length, choose learning partners, these characteristics to meet the entertainment, learning features, bringing the joy of learning a happy experience, immersive participation and multiple learning autonomy. But its purpose is clear, it is also different from the laissez-faire style entertainment, aimless entertainment. Long unchanged in the Internet case, the students adjust the time allocation of Internet entertainment, and more time and energy on learning English, and a positive change in the interest in learning and motivation. This change is generated by a positive learning experience and spontaneous motivation to learn, is a positive concept of conversion, over time, it will make college students for low-level network entertainment to produce antibodies to allow students to stay away from the vulgar, not only to help students overcome formal learning under pressure and resistance, enhance recreational learning but also in the virtual network space with the real world the actual ability to generate strong connection, so as to enhance the quality and level of network entertainment.

### ***4.3. Full of the spirit of cooperation learning partners make entertaining learning process and quality is guaranteed***

Affective strategies of second language learning in Oxford, there is one that is recommended that learners can communicate with others their own learning experience. In 3E activities, "others" is the voluntary combination of "quasi-virtual learning partners". 3E study partners actually know each other, more familiar with each other's learning styles and characteristics, coupled with voluntary twinning, the basis of their emotions better, and the two sides signed a "learning contract" with a never had. Identity, learning partners in the ordinary sense, the novelty and sense of responsibility to make their new perspective of learning activities for entertainment and is ready to expect from the heart and examine the behavior changes. Rich learning partner of the spirit of cooperation in the supervision and at the same time, will be companions into the learning activities in high-quality entertainment, so are circulating slowly formed. Learning partners have formed a positive and effective working relationship to become the entertainment of the learning process and quality assurance.

#### ***4.4. Entertainment, learning resource quality, learning partners, self-control and other factors constraining.***

The course of the study also revealed some problems in the entertainment of English learning. As learning itself systemic and complexity, entertainment, learning is also affected by many factors constraints. Through questionnaires and individual interviews found that the activities of the final effect is mainly affected by the entertainment and learning resources, learning partner, speed, and learning self-control, and other factors. Entertainment, learning, entertainment is very easy, is not easy to learn. Even by entertaining way to learn the final analysis, or a serious and explicit purpose of learning. From external resources, view from their own ability to learn from the attitude of learning partners, and both are entertainment to study the effect of influencing factors, as long as there are defects in which a factor, "sees the entertainment, but not learning "the situation will exist, and determine the pros and cons of the 3E activities effect.

But in general, entertainment learning activities to obtain better results that are the assumption that entertainment network of English learning resources, learning activities and entertainment of English on the English proficiency of university students from to a positive role in promoting.

## **5. Suggestion**

In this study, confirmed through a series of activities to enhance the entertainment of the network environment of English learning resources and learning activities to promote English proficiency of college students. Its significance lies in the talent needs of the characteristics and technical features combined with the Internet age, provide a useful complement to the formal study of college students. Why is the network environment, entertainment, learning can not be ignored? This is because the use of networks for lifelong learning is the trend of the times, compared with the general population, college students for the use of network resources and also more likely to benefit from the network resources. Guide students to look at the entertainment network resources, good use of the entertainment network resources, for the Digital Age, viability, and participatory learning ability would have a positive role.

In the following study, we will try a combination of centralized publishing and customization of network information, college students according to their interest in learning, learning opportunity, forms of learning to customize the entertainment to learning resources in order to achieve the convenience of personalized learning; interest in learning and learning motivation, coincide with the actual application, such as more than to communicate in English or English language application environment, or rely solely on the external pressure of the CET, the student population is difficult to form last and from the heart of English learning motivation, it is difficult to fundamentally improve the lifelong capacity for learning English.

## Acknowledge

This research was supported by Grant from the ‘Humanities Social Science Research Project: Youth Foundation Program’ from the Ministry of Education, P.R. China, under contract No. 11YJC880099. The project ‘Supportive Grants to Middle age and Young instructors’ from Beijing city owned university (under contract No. PHR201108153), Scientific Research Common Program of Beijing Municipal Commission of Education (KM201110028018)

## Reference

Ari Bader-Natal, Thomas Lotze, and Daniel Furr(2011). A Comparison of the Effects of Nine Activities within a Self-directed Learning Environment on Skill-Grained Learning, G. Biswas et al. (Eds.): AIED 2011, LNAI 6738, pp. 15–22.,Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2011

Asta Cekaite(2009 ). Collaborative corrections with spelling control: Digital resources and peer assistance, Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning. 4:319–341

Blumberg, P. (2000). Evaluating the evidence that problem-based learners are self-directed learners: A review of the literature. In E. H. Evensen & C. E. Hmelo (Eds.), *Problem-based learning; a research perspectives on learning interactions* (pp. 199–226). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Chinnery, G. (2006). *Emerging Technologies - Going to Language Learning & Technology*, 10(1), 9-16. Retrieved <http://lt.msu.edu/vol10num1/emerging/default.html>.

Erwin Tschirner (2001). *Language Acquisition in the Classroom: The Role of Digital Video, Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 14:3-4, 305-319

Elaine H. J. Yew . Henk G. Schmidt(2009). Evidence for constructive, self-regulatory, and collaborative processes in problem-based learning, *Health Science Educ* 14:251–273.

Feng Lu. *Helping less experienced students on English learning effectively by peer assisted learning strategies. Inside and outside of classroom*, 2010(12) 79-80

Foster, K. C., Erickson, G. C., Foster, D. F., Brinkman, D., & Torgesen, J. K. (1994). Computer administered instruction in phonological awareness: Evaluation of the Daisyquest program. *The Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 7, 126-137.

Ghaith, G. (2003). Effects of the learning together model of cooperative learning on English as a foreign language reading achievement, academic self-esteem, and feelings of school alienation. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 27(3), 451-474.

Knowles, M. S. (1975). *Self-directed learning; a guide for learners and teachers*. New York: Association Press.

Ling Hu & Mary Webb. (2009). Integrating ICT to higher education in China: from the perspective of activity theory. *Education and Information Technologies*, 14, 143–161.

Lycke, K. H., Grottum, P., & Stromso, H. I. (2006). Student learning strategies, mental models and learning outcomes in problem-based and traditional curricula in medicine. *Medical Teacher*, 28, 717–722.

Poushali Chatterjee (2010). Entertainment, engagement and education in e-learning. *Training & Management Development Methods* (24): 601-621.

Rebecca L. Oxford(1990). *Language Learning Strategies—What every teachers should know*. Heinle & Heinle Publishers.



Robert M. Gagne, Walter W. Wager, Katharine Golas, John M. Keller(2004). Principles of Instructional Design. Cengage Learning,(Edition 5).

Stuart Capstick, The Learning Environment of Peer Assisted Learning, the Peer Assisted Learning conference, January 2004.

Tuffs.R. Tudor.L. (1990).What the Eye Doesn't See: Cross-cultural Problems in the Comprehension of Video Material [J]. RELC Journal.21(2). 29-44.

Verona Font, Ben Davis(1979). Networking for life-long learning in graduate education. Alternative Higher Education. Vol.4(1). Fall, 1979, 24-31.

Watson, W.R. (2007). "Formative research on an instructional-design theory for educational video games", doctoral thesis, Department of Instructional Systems Technology, School of Education, Indiana University, Purdue, IN.

Weiju Shen(2011). Research on the effects of movie pedagogy in College English teaching: An empirical study. E-education Research (3) 106-112.

Wendy Belcher (2005). Writing your journal article in twelve weeks. SAGE Publication.

Wong, Wang-chan; Sheu, Myron; Moy, Eric. International Journal of Continuing Engineering Education and Life-Long Learning16. 3/4 (2006): 280-296.

Xiaojun Zhuang.(1996) Impact study on the English learning achievement and motivation by Cartoon in-class teaching [D].TaiNan: National University of TaiNan.

Zhiliang Yang, Huiming Da(2006). A measuring report on scaling English learning strategies for non-english majors' undergraduate. Science of psychology. 29(4): 838-844.

Zhiting Zhu, Peng Deng, Weiwen Sun(2005) Edutainment: new area in educational technology. Educational technology in China(5): 11-14

Zhiwen Hu & Ian McGrath (2011) Integrating ICT into College English: An implementation study of a national reform, Education Informational Technology. Retrieved <http://www.springline.com>