Edutainment Technology - A New Starting Point For Educational Development Of China

Yan Wang¹, MingZhang Zuo², XiangYong Li³

Abstract - This paper discusses the history, current situation and future development trend of Edutainment in China. The first part of this paper outlined history and current situation of research background and application of Edutainment technology in China; it was mainly analyzed from the television, multimedia education, k12 education. The second part will be compared with Japan, United States and the other developed countries entertainment and education fields in the development and application of a series of changes in the field of edutainment. It analyzes a series of changes in Chinese Edutainment fields, and the reasons for the slow development of the technical obstacles, traditional educational, cultural penetration and the dissemination of the concept of curing from the angle of the history of Edutainment technology and current situation in China. The third part of this paper will outlook the development and innovation of the Edutainment in the field of education in China from the aspects of the development of technology and changes of education culture.

Index Terms - Edutainment, “Teaching in joy”, Scientific& Educational TV

Definition

Edutainment is a combination of Entertainment and Education. The main purpose of it is promoting Education with Entertainment. Edutainment Technology is a new field of the Educational Technology. Edutainment Technology is the practice and theory which blended with educational purpose and measure, and on the basis of respecting the life value for learners, it promotes the experience and amusement of learners through creating, using and managing proper technology course and resource.

Edutainment can be defined as “a place where children could enjoy what they learn with a combination of many mediums (sound, animation, video, text, and images) by simply using a computer mouse to point and click on a particular picture, word, or button; and stories as well as information that will come alive on a computer screen” (Drain&Solomon, 1996). [1]

Traditional Chinese Education and Culture

Chinese ancient game has already appeared from prehistoric period, but the game at that time was simple, primitive, spontaneous, and always mixed with production, life and religion activities.

The Spring, Autumn and the Warring States Periods is the important period for the development of Chinese ancient game, Confucius was the first to advocate entertainment education. Under the different values and social concepts a lot of game activities are arisen; Tang and Song Dynasty is the great prosperity stage for development of Chinese folk games. Because the political and economic prosperity and the large of citizen stratum, various recreation, have got great abundant and completion; in the period of Ming and Qing; the prevailing of Neo-Confucianism had a great impact on education. Neo-Confucianism “recommend on Natural justice, eradication of desire”, corresponding to advocate “abstinence” and “main course ” learning and cultivation methods, which used in education and society, so the students show weakness and suave. At this point, Chinese ancient games of children demonstrate strong “moral” tendency. These games can be sorted the following aspects; Intelligence games, Sport games, Language games, Live games, and Scientific games, etc.

Development of Edutainment Technology in China

“Entertainment” should be everything that is combined with the educator's real life experience, education value (actively promote personal development) and etc. The form shouldn't be strictly limited and classified. It can be the activity supported by the multi-technique including the Television Dissemination, the Multimedia Education, Network Education and Education Entertainment etc. And, it will promote efficiency of educator.

● Theory and Research

Edutainment technology has been attracting many researchers to explore recently. The current study included the exploration and research of the nature and related concepts, the Subject characteristics and attributes, talents and abilities structure, Training Mode and curriculum frameworks and entertainment contains the idea of a learning mode in Edutainment technology.

● Company for educational game

Education department and domestic companies are trying to combine computer games with education. It included Aozhuoer series, game class series, WaWaYaYaYa series, and so on. Many enterprises are developing new educational games with the help from educator.

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**K12 education**

The SanChen cartoon Development Company, which is famous in China, associates with K12 education cooperation (www.k12play.com). It designed network game based on “K12 play education network platform”, which involved in primary and junior high school study, encyclopedia, general knowledge of life etc. For the purpose of education, it gathers knowledge, interest, competition, cooperation etc through the form of network game.

**ONE TEACHER’S STORY IN K12**

By linwang

Let me introduce myself. I am linwang, and I have been teaching high school Wuhan for five years. I want to provide my student with experiences, so I continually evaluate their interest and performance and seek innovative ways to improve those areas that seem weak.

Over the last few years, I focus on studying the instructional technology. K12 education brings varies learning type for student. It includes flash, media, game and Etc. K12 students are great candidates for e-learning. I introduce students to scientific inquiry while providing students the opportunity to solve real world problems with the help of community experts and researchers. I hope that students will enjoy, and benefit from K12 education.

I found the use of multiple types of game, media, and internet all to be very effective. Moreover, these technologies and processes enhance students’ opportunities to explore and attempt to establish personal meaning from K12 education.

**TV and Multi-media Technology**

As one of the concrete forms, the program of science & education has integrated the thoughts of edutainment technology, and as a kind of digit-media arts, it plays an indispensable part in the realization of edutainment technology. Edutainment technology provides the proofs for the amusement of science & education program, it emphasize the amusement in process of seeking and discovery, it satisfies learners’ curiosity, and it admits the value of the combination of amusement and education. Expressing the principle of edutainment technology in science & education television program will infuse the new vitality for science & education program. For example, the Discovery Channel is viewed by audience as the authority of educational TV. But science and entertainment should be found in Discovery program. People can absorb knowledge by happily watching program.

The Edutainment Technology also provides a possibility for the widespread usage for the education of multi-media technology. According to the covariance data of 1995, the application of multi-media system in education is only 35% in the world; the majority is used for index of business information and amusing activities [2]. And making use of multi-media teaching software, we display the development of variety things dynamic process by adopting animation, which make abstract or elusive content of courses vivid and interesting. And realize the principle of “learning and enjoying”.

**Current development of Edutainment Technology in developed country**

The person who first puts forward “Edutainment” is Robert Heyman (a medium producer of original American national geography academic association). He names the game type of his education movie as Edutainment. David Buckingham, who expert on media education in England, thinks edutainment which depend on the visual study material, as a blending study type by means of game or description with the least words.

Compared with the development of edutainment technology in China, some developed countries have the following characteristics, such as Japan, United States and the Europe counties.

**Commercialization**

In abroad, the main form of Edutainment is the explored or simulated Electronic games which designed by Game companies, the Educational television program which directed by TV station, and the Robot toy etc.

For example, The Discovery Channel and the National Geographic Channel in USA have confirmed that there is a world-wide market for well produced programs with solid educational content. The US also has the Learning Channel and recently the History Channel made a deal with Southpeak Interactive to produce serious edutainment programs. There are numerous lists of edutainment examples.

**Culture**

One characteristic of edutainment is a combination of figures from popular culture with fantasy worlds in order to achieve serious educational goals.

The foreign accent used in the speech audio and by the animated animal characters might not be suitable for the local children and culture.

**Gap**

Edutainment has not been integrated into the main Education circles. The gap exists between high educational goals and crass commercial exploitation. The product of edutainment is hardly used in the School learning. Because many of them are not designed for normal School education, the content is deviated from teaching and the function is fixed and obdurate. So the article compares the products of Edutainment between China and other countries. The Diagram is following.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE I</th>
<th>ANALYSIS OF PARAMETERS IN EDUTAINMENT PRODUCTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>China product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covers the National Curriculum</td>
<td>Covers the National Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct interaction</td>
<td>Direct interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor image positions</td>
<td>Good image positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of graphics, animation, aurral elements, and color</td>
<td>Input device-mouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low degree of interactivity</td>
<td>High degree of interactivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of challenge</td>
<td>Three levels of difficulty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound feedback</td>
<td>Sound and graphics feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The development and innovation of Edutainment Technology in China

Government and Education Departments
The CPC Central Committee and State Council on "some opinions for further strengthening and improving the ideological and ethical construction of teenagers" noted that we should encourage, guide, and support development of software enterprise to develop and disseminate game software products which can promote national spirit, reflect the characteristics of the times and be good for the healthy growth of juveniles. Government and education departments have introduced a series of policies to encourage the study of digital games. It brings a good opportunity and developing room for the research and development of our country’s digital games learning.

Company
Companies have attached great importance to the application research and development of digital games in education. More and more companies participate in the development of digital learning games, and it brings opportunity to the development of digital learning games.

Creative ideas
At the respect of science education TV communication, we should introduce the concept of TV entertainment programs to science and education TV communication, deliver the science education TV programs to audiences in a more relax and more attractive way, and realize a perfect fusion with entertainment education technology. The objective of science education TV program is enable ordinary people especially teenagers to participate in the program.

CONCLUSION
Along with continuous generalization and thorough appliance of the informational Educational, the aceptation of Education department and Parents on "learning through playing" and the research and the development of game software in research institutes and famous software companies, Edutainment technology will be a hot spot in the field of Chinese Educational technology. It requires researchers to update their notion, enrich their knowledge, explore and innovate, mining and utilize educational resource. All these can infuse vitality into the developing of Edutainment technique, and supply broader space for the development of Edutainment technique in China.

REFERENCES


