

Review research paper

EDUTAINMENT AND INFOTAINMENT IN DISTANCE LEARNING AND TEACHING ENGLISH TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND ADULT LEARNERS

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Abstract. *The era of digitization and post-literacy has changed many aspects of our life. This paper investigates into edutainment and infotainment as an approach to the instructional design of an English course for university students or adult learners, including distance learning. Apart from a brief history of edutainment and infotainment, the research attempts to realize the nature of edutainment, specify the concept, and point out its advantages and disadvantages. The article describes some instruments of edutainment and infotainment that can improve e-learning English. The findings may be interesting for the faculty engaged in synchronous and asynchronous e-learning and instructional designers creating online courses.*

Key words: *edutainment, infotainment, distance learning, synchronous/asynchronous e-learning, online course, instructional design*

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, our life is becoming more and more digitalized: we use e-commerce, e-mailing, teleconferencing, e-learning, and more. E-learning implies studying at home using computers and courses provided on the Internet, or the process of providing courses on the Internet or an intranet (Cambridge Dictionary <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-russian/e-learning>). E-learning as a type of distance learning can be synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous e-learning means that a teacher (lecturer, instructor, or tutor) and their learners are present online simultaneously. Asynchronous e-learning means doing an online course created by a lecturer beforehand or using any learning materials on the Internet.

E-learning has come into university and business education with many advantages, such as inclusion, availability, and adaptability. Indeed, e-learning can embrace many learners at a time, which makes it profitable in case it is a commercial educational project. It is available to all groups of learners including senior citizens, disabled people, and those living in distant areas. Moreover, it is available everywhere at any time. As many online courses consist of modules, they are adaptable to any group of learners, university discipline, or level of student's competence. E-learning provides everybody

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with a great opportunity to listen to a famous lecturer or join a high-profile course (often free) developed by some leading university. This is also a great chance for networking, getting a job or internship.

However, many aspects of e-learning are still disputable. Firstly, in asynchronous learning, it is often difficult to choose the right course for a university syllabus. Secondly, e-learning, like any distance learning format, reinforces learners' procrastination and all types of distraction. Many find it difficult to self-organize and declutter their home office. An online course may give little space to practice the skills or apply the knowledge it teaches. Due to this, many learners often quit before completing a course. Another concern is lack of live human communication in doing an online course, although online courses often involve a feedback from the author of the course and connection to the other learners. Finally, few universities and employees accept the certificates awarded upon completion of an online course as valuable as a high school diploma.

Synchronous e-learning shares similar concerns. The author surveyed 60 students at St. Petersburg State University, who are learning from home now (2020/21). The survey revealed complaints about learning from home such as: lack of live human communication and interpersonal practice (23%); greater need for concentration (16%); self-organization and time management (14%); self-motivation (11%); many distracting factors (10%); lack of feedback from lecturer (9%); students' and/or lecturers' poor technical skills (7%); bad Internet connection (7%); and boring presentation of learning materials (3%).

In fact, in many instances, lecturers extrapolate their offline approaches to teaching their disciplines online. This may be a reason for their students' low motivation, concentration and interest in learning. The hypothesis of this research is that elements of edutainment and infotainment could make up an efficient approach to learning English in formal and informal synchronous and asynchronous formats and raise learners' motivation, engagement and concentration in distance learning. This research aims to: 1) outline the history of edutainment and infotainment; 2) explain the mechanisms, advantages and disadvantages of edutainment and infotainment; 3) classify and illustrate the instruments of edutainment and infotainment applicable to learning English online; 4) survey adult learners and university students about their attitudes towards edutainment and infotainment in learning English; and 5) attempt to assess the efficiency of edutainment and infotainment in e-learning English.

2. AN OUTLINE OF EDUTAINMENT AND INFOTAINMENT

The word 'edutainment' is a blend of 'education' and 'entertainment'. *Edutainment* refers to entertaining TV programs and computer software, which are primarily meant for educational purposes. The educational purpose can be related to formal education in different school institutes or to informal learning in different daily life contexts without systematically organized education (Walldén, Soronen, 2004). The concept roots back to ancient rituals, myths, fairy-tales and fables used to educate and entertain at the same time. In 1973, Robert Hayman was the first to use the concept 'edutainment' in his report for the National Geographic Society.

The US military administration began to use the approach in the drawn cartoon series *Private Snafu* in 1943. This is a black and white series about soldier Snafu. The character does not care about his safety at war. The cartoon entertained the audience and helped them learn the safety rules at war. Another cartoon *Pop-Eye the Sailor Man* aimed to

attract new volunteers to the army service and boost the spirit of soldiers. In 1948, the Walt Disney Company described their documentary about wildlife as edutainment that aimed to attract attention, entertain, and inspire.

In the 1970s, the US and Great Britain used edutainment in outreach projects to tell everybody about cancer or AIDS. In 1975, the artist and designer Chris Daniels used the term to describe his *Millennium* project called *Elysian World*. Being interested in nuclear physics and quantum mechanics, Chris Daniels believed in education combined with arts and interwoven with imagination. In the 1980s, the popular *Muzzy in Gondoland* came out, at first, to teach and learn English, but later it was translated into different languages (Hangeldieva, Bogdanova, 2013; Dragun, 2015).

In the USSR, documentaries and feature films contained edutainment. In-service training games have been developing for the employees of factories and plants since 1932. As an example, in 1936, M. Birstein developed and launched a five-day game to imitate the conversion of a weaving mill to another product range. The imitation took 30 hours and aimed to check if the employees were able to make decisions similar to their regular ones in such situations (Panfilova, 2003).

In the early 20th century, business education emerged in the USA and later developed in Europe. Psychologists advised educational cartoons to develop multiple features of personality such as leadership, self-efficiency, and self-motivation. Due to their age and status, trainees did not want to be taught and learn like schoolchildren. It was necessary to work out an approach for comfortable adult learning. Hence, innovative techniques emerged such as relaxation, improvisation, reflection, and more. Universities and business schools began to use edutainment; and so did museums, tourism, cafes, and clubs. However, edutainment only meant having fun and playing games including business role-plays. Now, in a broad sense, edutainment means using any entertaining media or multimedia for learning (Hangeldieva, Bogdanova, 2013). It is also important to distinguish edutainment and *technotainment*, a combination of technology and entertainment, for example, promotional robots.

Infotainment boosted with the development of interactive multimedia in the late 1980s. In television, infotainment means reporting news and facts in an entertaining and humorous way. Generally, it is information that is provided on television, the Internet, etc., in an entertaining way (Cambridge Dictionary). Historically, news organizations maintained a distinction between 'hard' news and 'soft' news. In the 1980s, communication theorists began to use the term *infotainment* (a portmanteau of information and entertainment) as a synonym for soft news (G. P. Matthews). For Evgeniia Dragun's classification, infotainment includes breakfast television, docudrama, docusoap, infomercial, documentary chronicles, court shows, culinary shows, medical shows, TV programs aimed to change somebody's appearance, flat interior, etc., talk shows, TV journals, TV games, info shows, and gonzo journalism (Dragun, 2015).

Infotainment usually uses flashy graphics, fast-paced editing, music, and sensationalism or satire. Popular examples include *Entertainment Tonight*, *Hannity and Colmes*, *The Daily Show*, and shows that we would not classify as news earlier, such as *The Oprah Winfrey Show* (G. P. Matthews). In Russia, many journalists and bloggers/vloggers use infotainment on TV and the Internet. The best example of infotainment is Leonid Parfenov's documentaries, docudramas as well as his vlog *Parfenon* on YouTube.

3. EDUTAINMENT AND INFOTAINMENT: MECHANISMS, ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

The principle of emotional and engaging learning is one of the key didactic principles together with others such as visualization, truthfulness, dynamics, learning from analysis to synthesis, highlighting the key information, and individual and adaptive learning. Entertainment meets most of them as it always refers to a visualized and dynamic presentation of information. In asynchronous e-learning, learning platforms are challenged with creating compact videos injected with flashy graphics and pictures for online courses. Instructional designers do their best to make video lectures as concise and engaging as possible. Synchronous e-learning also demands a dynamic presentation (much faster than in face-to-face learning) with bright graphics, infographics, and pictures in slides, as well as fresh metaphors and off-beaten examples accompanied with short, concise videos and interactivity. The author is of the opinion that elements of edutainment and infotainment introduced into e-learning could help us meet its challenges.

How does edutainment work? Vyacheslav Bukatov (Bukatov, 2018) explains the efficiency of edutainment by a rehabilitation of unconscious mechanisms of learning usually suppressed. For traditional didactics, learners' knowledge is short-term and hollow without comprehension, consciousness, and discreet reflection. Given teachers get rid of this view, they will have to change the way they evaluate learners' knowledge, present the information, and organize their students. Then, teachers are free from artificial stillness of students in classroom, pseudo-collectivism, and involuntarily exploited learned helplessness often thrust to learners. Edutainment means both education and entertainment. However, the concept attains a new meaning, which is not only education or entertainment, and appeals to unconscious processes included into both learning and play. Learning and entertainment transform into a new reality one can even introduce in regular secondary school (Bukatov, 2018, Dyakonova, 2012, 2016). Thus, learning with an aim shifted to a motif becomes a more natural process similar to how little children learn to walk, speak, and interact.

Edutainment and infotainment are understandable, natural, and involving. They do not need to be funny, but do need to be interesting. Paraphrasing Randy White's characteristics of children's play, for adults, edutainment is highly pleasurable, process-oriented (although the outcome is as important as the process), often self-initiated and self-directed, an activity of the mind, imaginative, hands-on/participatory (even if limited with imposed tasks or rules), and may be open-ended (see: White, 2003). That is why edutainment and infotainment appeal to many target groups of learners. These approaches can embrace, among others, low/non-motivated learners, low educated adults, senior learners, and immigrants. Corporate trainings often use these approaches for employees of all levels, including top management.

At the same time, edutainment and infotainment cause concerns. The contents of edutainment may be fragmented and/or incoherent. That is why it is crucial to highlight a clear trajectory to help learners follow the content of a lesson or a course and integrate sparks of entertainment into it. This should be a wise collaboration of what is to be learnt and what is used to entertain. Otherwise, the learnability and entertaining means of edutainment can stand too far from each other. This is challenging because we never know how learners will take, for instance, an online course. They can skip part of it or randomly choose individual fragments (only entertaining games and quizzes). Much depends on an instructional designer's capability to highlight key information in learning materials to avoid wordiness, engage learners, maintain contact with audience, and let edutainment and infotainment trigger better learning.

Another concern is lack of assessment and evaluation in edutainment: it is difficult to measure the efficiency of a game or a song for learning. A solution might include monitoring the efficiency of edutainment and infotainment and their role in a lesson or a course, checking for possible misleading aspects, assessing learners' results, and activating the transference of the learned material into life.

In addition, we should take into consideration the fact that adult learners often reject entertainment in learning because they regard it as a waste of their time. Randy White explains: "What we call children's edutainment is really just children's play. To adults, children's play is fun, relaxing and recreational, not work. Many adults view children's play as nothing more than mindless play with little value. For children, nothing could be further from the truth. For adults, edutainment falls somewhere in the middle of the education-entertainment continuum, with a little of both. For children up to about age 8, play is a unique form of edutainment since it is both 100% education and 100% entertainment. Children are biologically wired to play. It is nature's way of programming them with a pleasurable activity that teaches them about the world around them and how to become part of society. Play is child's work. Play to children is unlike play to adults." (White, 2003)

What is the added value of edutainment and infotainment for learning and teaching? Firstly, they expand the landscape of formal and informal education. Secondly, the elements of edutainment and infotainment used in teaching appeal to a new nature of cognition in contemporary learners, both youngsters and adults. They tend to learn better and easier, when in an environment similar to their real life, where they are used to interactivity, fast flowing chunks of information, clipped and/or fragmented information, and information delivered in the most animated way.

Thus, attractive and engaging edutainment and infotainment as an approach can contribute to learners' motivation, concentration, reflection, and progress. The instructional designer should artistically interweave the elements of edutainment and infotainment into a course in order to balance education and entertainment and avoid entertainment outweighing learning. It is also important to offer learners a diversity of instruments of edutainment and infotainment and monitor their efficiency.

4. THE INSTRUMENTS OF EDUTAINMENT AND INFOTAINMENT USED IN LEARNING AND TEACHING ENGLISH

Within the research, I have attempted to classify edutainment and infotainment instruments. However questionable it may seem, a classification of edutainment and infotainment instruments used for synchronous and asynchronous e-learning English could be said to consist of three groups.

Among *edutainment instruments* are vocabulary/grammar/communication games; role-plays; funny dictations; learning video/audio, songs, poems, chants; and learning applications. Examples are a global learning platform company *Kahoot!* (<https://kahoot.it/>) and *Carrington's Pedagogy Wheel* (<https://www.teachthought.com/technology/the-pedagogy-wheel/>). Allan Carrington, who was a learning designer at the University of Adelaide, has offered the Pedagogy Wheel. This is a model for planning academic activities embracing the competences of graduate students in the 21st century. First, he put apps around the outside of Bloom's Taxonomy Wheel and organized them according to his cognitive domain categories. Later, he added Graduate Attributes and Employable Capabilities for version two, then

Motivation and Ruben Puentedura's SAMR (Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition) Model for version three. Then, he updated the apps and doubled the number available per category for version four. He also added further advice on app selection criteria. How does it contribute to learning and teaching? The Pedagogy Wheel associates mobile apps with the educational purpose they are most likely to serve. It then enables teachers to identify the pedagogical place and purpose of their various app-based learning and teaching activities in the context of their overall objectives for the course, and with reference to the wider developmental needs of their students. (Carrington <https://www.teachthought.com/technology/the-pedagogy-wheel/>).

I believe infotainment can augment edutainment, but only when it is accompanied with educational purposes and a tutorial or guide of how to use it for learning and assess the outcomes of learning. A group of *infotainment instruments* may include: documentaries, feature films, cartoons, comics, memes, quotes, interesting facts, interviews, speeches, presentations (TED.com), soft news and other TV genres (Dragun, 2015), breakfast television, docudrama, docusoap, infomercial, documentary chronicles, court shows, culinary shows, medical shows, TV programs aimed to change somebody's appearance, flat interior etc., talk shows, TV journals, TV games, info shows, and gonzo journalism. One of regular ways to use infotainment in learning English is to involve interesting facts (<https://www.did-you-know.com/>), memes (<https://memes.com/>), quotes (<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes>), and films (<https://film-english.com/>) for discussion to contribute to practicing speaking skills and expanding vocabulary. Another resource to use infotainment for developing listening and speaking skills is BBC Learning English Lingohack (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/lingohack>). This resource provides short soft news with downloadable transcripts and audio tracks, which makes the materials mobile. The videos are convenient to work with both in class and individually. In class, I offer these videos for 'grasp' comprehension. As the topics are diverse and the learners do not know which video the lecturer chooses, this makes the activity real-like and sometimes challenging. Then, students are assigned to look up the vocabulary and grammar they may not know and listen or watch a video as many times as they need to make sure they understand every single word. In their following class, they make up a summary of a news item and bring extra information on the topic for discussion.

Third group of instruments includes those where *infotainment and edutainment overlap*: myths, fables, fairy-tales, storytelling, songs, stand-ups, quests, quizzes, jokes, anecdotes, crosswords, puzzles, riddles, infographics, location-based edutainment (R. White, 2003): (online) museums, galleries, events, performances, zoos, concerts, blogs/vlogs/YouTube channels, board games, computer games, applications, themed web pages, social networks. These instruments can be pure infotainment if they have no educational purpose and an algorithm or a guide including assessment. As an example, Randy White stands for Location-Based Edutainment (LBE) and defines it as "events, programs and attractions where the entertainment qualities are the primary draw, with the learning or education being a byproduct" (White, 2003). Now, LBE is available online thanks to projects such as *GoogleArtProject* or *StreetView*. One can take a virtual tour, walk along a street in New York, or visit a museum or a zoo, but it will become edutainment only when an instructional designer/English instructor assigns it with a task and a guide for learning. This group of instruments could coin a term 'info-edutainment'.

5. MULTIMEDIA IN INFOTAINMENT AND EDUTAINMENT

To make many of these instruments applicable and attractive for e-learning we need to use *multimedia*. Audio-visualization and computer graphics (animation, 3D graphics, pictures, schemes, infographics, morphosynchron (the term was coined by Leonid Parfenov (Parfenov, 2017)), synchronized photo and video, augmented reality, holograms) help model different objects, environments, and virtual reality (VR). These can create an illusion of communicating to a past, present, future, or imagined world. VR appeals to learning arts, design, construction, graphics, modelling, and many other domains. It can also be helpful in teaching communication in English. A simple example is a drill programmed to help practice using 'standard' English phrases in different life rituals like, for instance, a dialogue with a virtual interlocutor in a small talk, a business meeting, or at a birthday party: standard phrases pop up and a learner must reply as quickly as possible. If a learner replies in the wrong way, the program shows the right one, and the drill repeats. As a result, English learners start using the right phrases automatically.

For asynchronous e-learning, it is important to consider the latest trends in creating video. In 2021, emotional videos are mostly valued; visualization is becoming a language (it is easier to show/see something than tell about it/listen to an explanation); a video must be short, clear and concise (no wordiness), interactive (with a chance to ask a question, do a quiz, like/dislike, or comment). Vertical format videos (for smartphones) and video/audio podcasts are becoming more and more popular (EduTech, 2021). Matthew Pierce, Learning and Video Ambassador, states that, according to a survey conducted by TechSmith Corporation, 20% respondents choose to watch a video because it looks entertaining and 23% stop a video because it is boring/not entertaining (Pierce, EduTech, 2021).

Synchronous e-lecturing also needs a portion of edutainment and infotainment. Videoconferences, video-lectures, video-seminars and webinars are widely used in business and university education. They may be systemic or occasional, frontal or individual, live or recorded. A lecturer can connect to other cities and countries via Skype, Zoom, VoiceBoxer, or any other platform. Large LCD screens create a special atmosphere (an illusion) of exposure. The participants can communicate with each other and the experts live or via chat rooms. The traditional lecturing method can (and often does) combine audio-visual tools, such as videos, infographics, 3D graphics, or VR.

In addition, multimedia environment can virtualize assessment and evaluation of learners' knowledge and skills. E-learning can use multiple online quests and quizzes along with regular peer review tasks, tests, exams, course works or final projects, as well as live online sessions with English instructors. Now, university students and adult learners can create sufficient products for learning and (self) assessment. Learners' portfolios can include themed web pages, quests and quizzes, infographics, short films, blogs, vlogs, and Instagram/YouTube channels in English.

Thus, informative multimedia and computer software integrated into infotainment and edutainment or traditional approaches can reinforce efficient e-learning. This is another challenge for instructional designers who develop online courses and/or syllabi for synchronous learning.

6. DISCUSSION

It is still a question whether we need such processes as gamification in adult learning. Within the research, I have surveyed 57 adult learners doing an in-house English course at an IT company about their attitudes towards edutainment and infotainment. The survey shows that 26 respondents find it useless to play games and do crosswords to learn English. Once in class, three out of six learners opt-out of taking part in a game or a role-play. The results correlate Randy White's findings mentioned above (White, 2003). At the same time, adult learners prefer downloading applications and play computer games to learn vocabulary or listening to podcasts to develop their listening skills (49 out of 57 respondents).

Many learners (51 out of 57 in this survey) consider watching feature films and documentaries in English, although they often do not know how to make this activity efficient for learning. Passive watching (without vocabulary and grammar acquisition or discussion) is time consuming and in many cases useless. Due to this, developing themed modules based on a feature film or documentary is another instrument of edutainment. An example is a site run by Kieran Donaghy with multiple lesson plans and viewing guides designed for learning English via watching films. A viewing guide includes viewing recommendations, film synopsis with glossary, pre-viewing discussion questions, glossary of key words, phrasal verbs and expressions with phonetic spelling used in the film and example sentences to aid comprehension and vocabulary acquisition, post-viewing discussion questions, and post-viewing writing and videoing tasks (Kieran Donaghy <https://film-english.com/>).

Another question is whether it is possible to measure the efficiency of edutainment and infotainment. M. Horila and others (Horila, Nokelainen, Syvänen, Överlund, 2002) have developed criteria for evaluating e-learning materials in terms of their pedagogical impact. They are: 1) learnability; 2) graphic appearance and layout; 3) technical requirements; 4) intuitive efficiency; 5) suitability for different learners and different situations; 6) ease of use: technical and pedagogical approach; 7) interactivity; 8) objectiveness; 9) sociality; 10) motivation; and 11) added value for teaching (Cit. ex Walldén, Soronen, 2004). Prima facie, most instruments of edutainment and infotainment meet all the requirements. However, it is not always true. I have tried to adjust Horila's criteria to measure the efficiency of edutainment, infotainment and info-edutainment instruments I use in synchronous and asynchronous e-learning and teaching English to adult learners and university students. As all the instruments seem to be intuitively efficient, learnable, objective and social, I leave these criteria out as met by default. As I previously mentioned, e-learning demands faster pace and more engaging manner of delivery of learning materials to maintain learners' concentration and involvement. Thus, I suggest adding the length and level of engagement of an instrument of edutainment, infotainment or info-edutainment to judge its efficiency in e-learning and teaching to adults and university students.

As it is impossible to analyze all the instruments, I compare the efficiency of feature films and role-playing in e-learning English. In asynchronous e-learning, a feature film seems to be efficient. A film usually features an engaging plot, graphic and sound appearance, and suspense which altogether motivate learners to watch it. However, it is not easy to use film watching as a pedagogical approach: the learner needs a viewing guide and tasks, and organized discussion and assessment, which is often a time-and-effort-consuming burden for the teacher. In addition, not all students will enjoy the film, as it may not suit different learners. In synchronous e-learning, the length of the film (if it is not short film or abstract) and interactivity are questionable. In both cases, the added

value for learning is also questionable because much depends on what film it is and how learning is organized.

A role play (pretending to be someone else, especially as part of learning a new skill) also seems to be efficient in e-learning. However, in asynchronous e-learning, it is difficult to use technically. We can either program it (which involves using multimedia to create its graphic appearance) or invite learners to organize it by themselves (for example, to record a video). Thus, it is questionable in terms of engagement, motivation, and interactivity. In synchronous e-learning, role-playing is highly motivating, engaging and interactive. It is easy to organize technically and pedagogically. It may be short and compact enough not to bother learners. It is usually suitable for different learners, although some may be too shy to take an active part in it. Thus, it has a high added value for teaching when well-organized and meets learners' interests. Table 1 shows the results of my approach to assessing the efficiency of feature films and role plays as edutainment, infotainment or info-edutainment instruments in a more illustrative way. My findings rely solely on my own practice and experience in online teaching English to adults at an IT company and students at St. Petersburg University in 2020-2021, and may be subjective.

Table 1 Assessing the efficiency of feature films and role plays as edutainment and infotainment instruments in e-learning

	Feature films		Role play	
	Async. e-learning	Sync. e-learning	Async. e-learning	Sync. e-learning
Engagement	high	high	questionable	high
Motivation	high	high	questionable	high
Interactivity	questionable	questionable	questionable	high
Graphic appearance	high	high	questionable	no
Length	may be time-consuming	lengthy	suitable	suitable
Suitability for different learners	questionable	questionable	questionable	suitable for different learners
Technical ease of use	easy	easy	difficult	easy
Ease of use as a pedagogical approach	difficult	difficult	difficult	easy
Added value for teaching	questionable	questionable	questionable	high

It is clear now that the instruments that we accepted as ultimately beneficial in the beginning may have a questionable added value for teaching. Their efficiency depends on: 1) the format of e-learning (synchronous or asynchronous); 2) multimedia and technical support available; 3) instructional design; and 4) organization.

Thus, assessing the efficiency of edutainment and infotainment is challenging but rewarding. Edutainment and infotainment help organize a lesson or a course in an attractive way, but may turn out to be waste of time in terms of e-learning and/or teaching. This approach to assessment may seem disputable, but it helps rethink the use of infotainment and edutainment and find a better application of these means to e-learning.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Edutainment and infotainment are efficient approaches to comfortable adult learning because they rehabilitate unconscious mechanisms of learning and involve improvisation, relaxation, reflection, and creativity. The main advantages of edutainment and infotainment are their engaging nature, interactivity, inclusiveness, and learner-centered design. Possible disadvantages may include fragmented and/or incoherent content, misbalanced learnability and entertaining, lack of feedback, assessment, and evaluation.

Classification of edutainment and infotainment instruments may include infotainment instruments, edutainment instruments, and the instruments that can be either pure infotainment or become edutainment when accompanied with a task and tutorial. Multimedia make edutainment and infotainment even more attractive for e-learning. The instruments of edutainment and infotainment will be developing along with technology. Technological advances contribute to learning languages, as technology has become part of learners' everyday life.

Teaching and learning languages, including synchronous and asynchronous distance learning, need augmenting with elements of edutainment and infotainment because they can diversify traditional formal and informal learning, make education more inclusive and attractive, and meet a new mode of perception and cognition in contemporary learners. It is important to balance education and entertainment within the instructional design of a course in order to make it more learnable, coherent in form and content, and connected to practical knowledge and skills. Assessing a need in edutainment and infotainment and their efficiency in a course may help to avoid wasting teachers' and learners' time and effort.

Further research might explore into how to choose different edutainment and infotainment instruments to meet specific learning challenges in the most effective way. Assessment and evaluation of the efficiency of more edutainment and infotainment instruments in e-learning is another perspective for the research.

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