Online English Education for Teenagers in China

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ABSTRACT

With the growing importance of English learning and the changes of people’s educational conception, online English education for teenagers has become very popular in the past few years. Due to its flexible, convenient and vivid teaching mode, online English training creates an active and interesting learning atmosphere, which draws the attention and acceptance of parents and students. Exploring the reasons for the craze of online English education for teenagers, the advantages of online teaching mode and the sustainable learning of the teenagers can blaze a more scientific and effective trail for both the learners and teachers, which will better meet the teenagers’ diversification, individuation and lasting requirements.

MANUSCRIPT

Over the past few years, with the widespread of computer and the transformation of people’s educational conception, online education has become so popular that in 2012, the approximate market sale of China online education reached CNY 72 billion. According to an investigation, around CNY 14 billion has been invested in online English training in 2016. Among the online education and training courses, English training for teenagers, whether the participants or expenses, accounts for a large share in the education market. More and more experts and parents become aware of the current phenomenon and growing demand for online English training, even in the just concluded session of the 19th CPC National Congress, online education, as an important educational issue, has been included into the conference report. This move signifies the government has realized the importance of developing online education, which, as a favorable piece of news for online educators and companies, is a motivation as well as a supervision of online education.

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Reasons for the Popularity of Online English Education for Teenagers

In Chinese tradition, children’s education is always the most priority. English, as a second language, is one of the most difficult as well as the most important curricular in our educational system. It is thought to be “a hard nut to crack” for most students, especially for teenagers who haven’t got any capacity of autonomous learning competence. Therefore, both teachers and parents have been working to find an efficient way to help children grasp English. Online English education for teenagers, due to its great flexibility and convenience, becomes an effective way out for many children.

The easy Access to Facilities in an information era is one of the most important reasons for the widespread of online English training for teenagers. In an information era, the widespread of computer and internet provides an easy access to online education. Anyone who has the access to a computer and internet facilities can look for and attend an online training class. In the last few years, with the development and widespread of Mobile Terminals in China, more and more MT platforms and APPs have been entering into different aspects of people’s life, which is dramatically changing our conception of business, life and education.

Compared with traditional English education for teenagers, the great accessibility of oral English practice, live discussions, visual English chatting, various options of training materials etc. arouse the great interest of the learners, which in turn contributes to the further widespread and popularization of online English education. The advanced facilities provide a convenient access to English learning for teenagers, who can easily learn how to operate it alone, thus cultivating the awareness of autonomous learning.

Advantages of Online English Education for Teenagers

Compared with traditional English education in China, online training has numerous advantages, such as saving money, being flexible and convenient etc. For most parents and teenagers, freely choosing what to learn and when to learn is the first reason for them to choose online English training.

According to a survey, two thirds of the teenagers interviewed are undertaking more than three specialty training classes after school, which accounts for most part of their spare time. The time spent on the way as well as the high educational fees become a huge problem for most parents. Therefore, to take advantage of the fragmentation of time to perform effective study will be a good choice. With online education, children can make the most of large amounts of fragmentary time to acquire some words or expressions, to read a passage or just to practice oral English. English learning is a repetitive and ubiquitous process, and with a pad or mobile phone, the teenagers can easily make an appointment with the online teacher to practice their English. This attribute distinguishes online English learning from the traditional English training classes, which doesn’t need the learners to prepare textbooks and other learning materials, thus simplifying the learning preparation. Therefore, the English learners have great flexibility in choosing appropriate time, even as short as half an hour, to have an online class.

As for what to learn, the teenagers have more options other than those courses taught at school. Online English class provides courses such as phonetics, grammar, reading and speaking, offering more options for teenagers. Pictures, videos, stories
combine together to catch the students’ interest and attention. Face-to-face and one-to-one teaching mode makes English learning more interactive, interesting and pertinent, thus intriguing the teenagers’ great interest. If choosing foreign teachers, the teenagers can enjoy native English, taste the alien culture and get the most native English, which is just what the students couldn’t get in school learning.

Sustainable Learning and Teaching of Online English for Teenagers

English learning should be a sustainable process, especially for teenagers who do not perform very well in English study. As a second language, most Chinese teenagers feel it’s so difficult to learn English, especially for the improvement of their spoken English. Although some students can get high scores in English examinations, they still feel so difficult to open their mouth to speak English. To overcome the hard nut “dumb English”, sustainable learning is required to turn English learning into a habitual process. It’s a lasting process to improve the teenagers’ reading, speaking and writing as a whole step by step. Meanwhile, as for the online teaching industries, keeping sustainability is also a key factor for its future development. To achieve this goal, the online teaching should create the foundation for a sustainable, informal learning atmosphere to foster the teenagers’ capacity-building. The online courses offered should adapt to the teenagers’ requirements, which should be duly updated and enriched, since language teaching should keep up with the society and move with the times. Only through this way can online English teaching for teenagers go on for a very long way. Meanwhile, an instrument for teaching and learning assessment should be created to provide an interactive evaluation for both the teachers and teenagers, which will guarantee a sustainable and positive development of the online English teaching for teenagers.

CONCLUSIONS

According to a survey made by an information consulting corporation in Beijing, in China, over 90% of teenagers and their parents have an urgent demand for education service with low-cost, high-quality and sustainable development. The information era has changed our conception of teaching and learning, which makes online English teaching for teenagers an obvious option. The easy access to MT, the highlight on abilities instead of exam-oriented English, the focus on quality-oriented education and the immersion teaching mode and rich language materials work together for the popularity of online English education. In order to make full use of the online teaching platform, the teenagers should choose appropriate courses and keep sustainable learning to improve their English level step by step; as for the online teaching industries, they should choose a favorable teaching mode, provide rich language materials and constantly improve their teaching methods to meet the demand of the learners. Only by doing so can we blaze a more scientific and effective trail for the online English education for teenagers.
REFERENCES